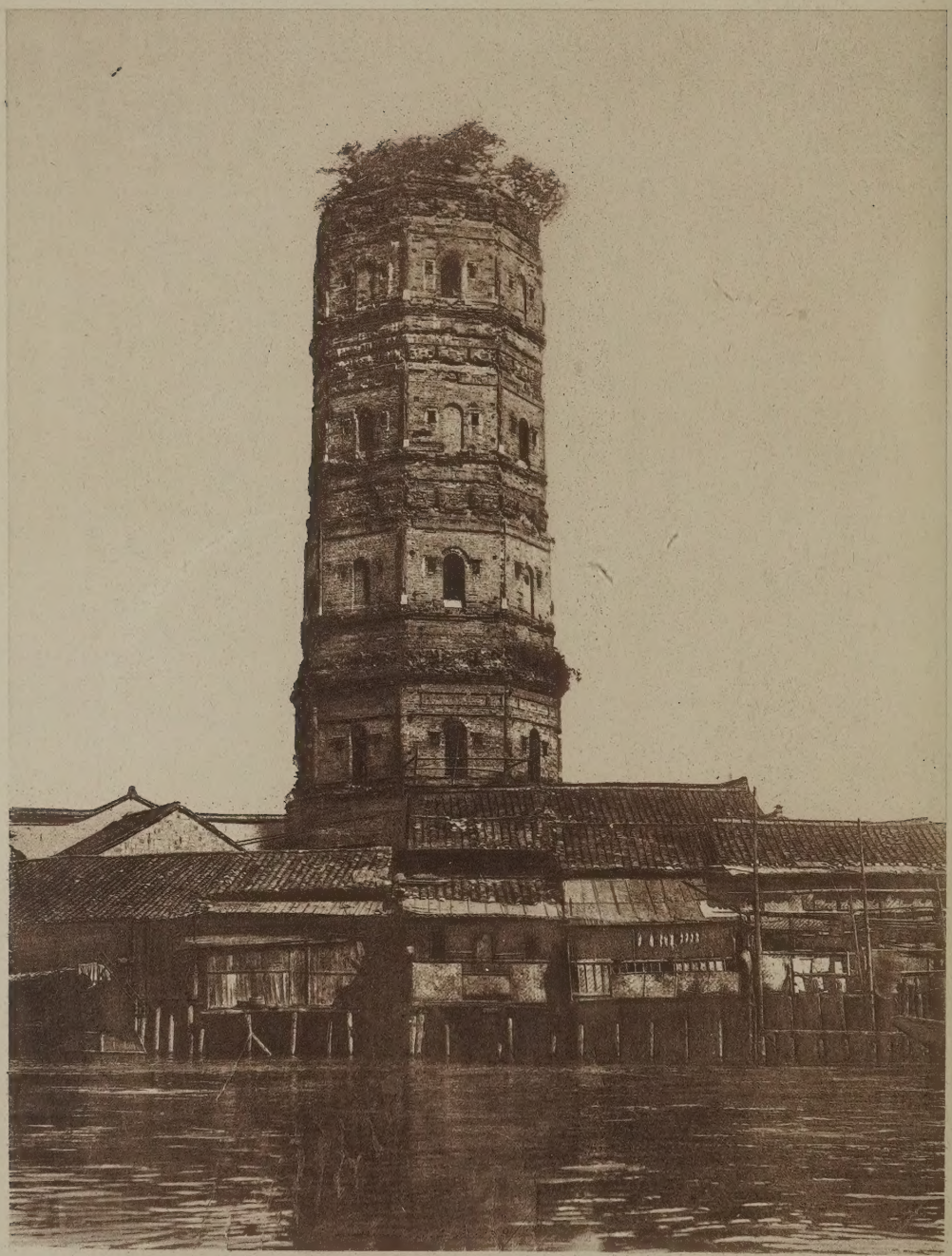

Ancient Pagoda near Shanghai

The New America
AND
The Far East

By G. Waldo Browne
AND
Nathan Haskell Dole
With a General Introduction *by* EDWARD S. ELLIS, A. M.

And the following Special Articles

Hawaii
By the Honorable Henry Cabot Lodge

The Philippines
By Major-General Joseph Wheeler

Japan
By His Excellency Kogoro Takahira

China
By the Honorable John D. Long

Cuba
By General Leonard Wood

Porto Rico
By the Honorable Charles H. Allen

Alaska
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PORTO RICO.

BY

CHARLES H. ALLEN,

GOVERNOR OF PORTO RICO.

THE successful administration of Porto Rico will prove of the greatest importance to us as a nation, and the attitude of the whole Spanish-American world will be influenced to a considerable extent by what we do on the island. Not only Cubans, but Spanish-Americans all over the world, are intently watching the outcome of our government in Porto Rico, and the proper way to win the respect and good wishes of all these people is to administer affairs wisely and conservatively. Even the question of Cuban annexation will depend, I think, largely upon our success or failure in Porto Rico. If we can demonstrate to the Cubans that the people of Porto Rico are definitely and materially benefited by our form of government, it will be natural for them to wish to come into the Union. But we must also consider the moral effect that a wise administration of Porto Rican affairs will have upon the great Spanish-American republics farther south of us. It is to our interest to keep in close touch and sympathy with these countries, and fair dealing with the people of Porto Rico and Cuba will accomplish this in a most satisfactory way.

The affairs of the island, material, financial, and political, are successfully reaching a condition that must prove satisfactory to the people of both places. It is true that grave problems still confront us there, and we must meet them intelligently and hopefully. It has been my constant aim to win the confidence and trust of the natives, for in no other way can the island be changed into an American possession in spirit as well as in name. The civil government established there seemed to be the best that could be devised on short notice, and although it was all new to the natives, it has worked wonders among them. They have shown an enthusiasm in accepting it, and in adapting themselves to the new order of things, that greatly simplified our labour. Had they been less responsive we might have met with difficulties that years of strenuous work would not have overcome. The industrious and intelligent natives have been with but few exceptions our greatest helpers, and they have made the way comparatively smooth for the United States authorities.

The new conditions of life and thought, of law and finance, and of habits and customs which the natives had inherited from ages past, made it difficult at first for us to adjust ourselves to the situation. It required study and tact to approach some of the questions without making mistakes. But the people are now learning to understand our methods and institutions. The leading merchants and public men have given us every encouragement, and delegations of them have come to the palace day

after day to learn more of our methods of administration and institutions. Others have publicly thanked us for our efforts, and for the high examples set. In fact, the success of our institutions is already assured if wisdom and patience are shown in dealing with the islanders in the future as in the past. The people are very sensitive to injuries and slights, as well as responsive to good intentions and efforts in their behalf, and we could easily lose their sympathy and confidence by a series of mistakes or intentional wrong-doing. There is every reason why our administration of the affairs of the island should be of an exemplary character.

The material development of Porto Rico is closely interwoven with its public and political evolution. If the natives find there is no prospect of their finding a market for their labour and products of the soil, they would naturally be discontented under any form of government. It is not sufficient that the island should be a rich and fertile one. There should be capital and brains to convert the possibilities of the soil into salable products, and then find markets for them. This is a serious matter, that both leading merchants and public men must consider in the broadest sense. The development of Porto Rican industries will give to the people new contentment and faith in our government and institutions.

Many of these natural industries are in a most deplorable condition, and they are in great need of energetic men to develop them. In some instances the native owners of land are waiting for our government to do something, and they refuse either to sell or cultivate their estates. Some of the Porto Ricans have shown great energy and business capacity in cultivating their lands, and their crops are large and profitable. They have lacked the necessary capital to make sugar raising a paying industry, but great changes are being made in this direction. Capital is coming into the island, and new sugar plants will be erected in the near future. The new tariff arrangements will greatly stimulate sugar raising, and the industry is bound to prove one of the most profitable on the island. The sugar planters of Porto Rico will receive $37.50 per ton in gold more than those of the West Indies for similar products, and this discrimination in favour of the former will tend to build up an industry on the island that will give employment to thousands. Those who have not the necessary capital to go into sugar raising will find profit in growing fruits and tobacco. The climate and soil are eminently adapted to the production of fine tropical fruits and high grades of tobacco. One can raise either on a small farm, and with little capital to start with. For this reason tobacco and tropical fruits will be more popular than sugar with the average Porto Rican with a few acres of land and a little money.

Heretofore the native planters depended almost entirely upon coffee, and if the season ruined that crop the whole population was made a severe sufferer. With more diversified crops such annual deprivations would not so often occur. The tornadoes would frequently destroy all the coffee plantations, and there would be two or three seasons of hardships, and the planters would have to raise money in Europe to carry them over the hard times. In prosperous years everybody spent money freely, and

the planters would go to Paris and live in luxury for a season. The labourers who were dependent upon the coffee planters for their daily wages would be the heaviest sufferers. By diversifying the industries of the island there will be less chance of general crop devastation, and the small farmers, instead of spending all their profits abroad, will accumulate something ahead and keep it on the island.

Agriculturally the island of Porto Rico is one of the richest and most promising spots in the Western world. Everything adapted to such a climate grows luxuriantly and abundantly. It is a veritable garden spot of the world. Land is comparatively cheap, but under American administration it is steadily increasing in value. Labour is cheap, and the cost of living is small. It is a tropical country, but not unhealthful as most warm countries. There are no epidemics, and the climate is tempered at all times by sea-breezes. The work of establishing a civil government in such a delightful country, and among a people so responsive and appreciative, is both interesting and pleasant. When everything is arranged harmoniously, and systems now established in perfect working order, I predict that the island and its people will be one of the rarest gems of America's possessions.

CHARLES H. ALLEN.

VALLEY OF TRINIDAD.

CHAPTER VIII.

OVERLAND TO MATANZAS.

THE next province in our westward tour is Santa Clara, which contains some of the oldest settlements, and largest sugar plantations and mills on the island. The famous old Cinco Villas are in this province. And in this, too, are the two important seaports on the south, Trinidad and Cienfuegos, already described. These are the last important ports on the southern coast, after this the northern shore being more favoured in this respect. Here we are pretty forcibly reminded of the many pests in the shape of insects that exist on the island.

Cuba is not as free as the Hawaiian Islands from deadly pests and insects, and the centipede, tarantula, scorpion, mosquito, and sand-fly live here as if "to the manor born." Over three hundred species of flies are known, among which those to be most dreaded by the newcomer are the *rodador*, or roller, which clings to one until satiated with blood, and then tumbles off and rolls away; the *jejen*, so small as not to be seen with the naked eye, but with a sting sharp enough to be felt beyond dispute. Both of these are considered by many to belong to the mosquito family. Neither nets nor smoke avail against the last-named pest. An-

other insect to be dreaded is the *chigo*, or *jigger*, which very much resembles the common house flea. The female of this species burrows under the skin of the foot, and unless she is removed entire, before she has laid her eggs, serious consequences are like to follow.

We have mentioned the fact that the only animal peculiar to the island is the rat-shaped *jutia*, which the Spanish denominated as the "voiceless dog." These little creatures grow to a length of from twelve to eighteen inches. Besides these, there are a few deer, descended from animals brought to the island from Europe. Wild dogs and cats are plentiful in the woods, these having sprung from their domesticated kindred. Among domestic animals, of which there are over four million head, are the ox, horse, and dog, forming a large part of the wealth of the island. Domestic fowl include geese, turkeys, pigeons, and peacocks; there are claimed to be over two hundred species of indigenous birds, and over seven hundred different kinds of fish abound in the bays, inlets, and rivers. Turtles are common, and, at the time of the discovery by Columbus, the natives made an industry of cultivating these for food. The *cayman*, or crocodile, and iguana, a kind of lizard, are more common than desired, while sharks are quite numerous in some of the bays. Snakes are not common, the largest being the *maja*, often fifteen feet in length and a foot and a half in circumference, but harmless. There is another species, of a venomous nature, by the name of *juba*, which at full size is about six feet in length.

Especially favoured with her endless summers, her smiling blue seas, her cerulean skies, her gorgeous flowering plants, her shores made bright with the tints of precious stones, that gleam with a thousand prismatic hues, until they outvie the rainbow, without being overburdened with unpleasant denizens of the forests, Cuba is blest also with her variety of beautiful birds. The list is a long one, but foremost comes flitting out from the groves of stately and wide-spreading trees, in flocks, the golden robin, almost putting to shame his Northern brother; then there is the *pedoreva*, or bluebird, with its bright-coloured throat and breast contrasting vividly with its pea-green head and body; the catbird, vivacious and saucy; the paroquet, of dazzling plumage; the Spanish woodpecker, cheerful and brilliant; wild pigeons in almost any number and colour; the English ladybird, with a bonnet of blue, a scarf of scarlet over its breast,

and a cloak of green running into black over its back; then there is another woodpecker of golden hue; the ibis, and the indigo-bird; and more than half a hundred varieties of the humming-bird. Some of these last are no larger than a butterfly, with less than half its breadth of wings. Casting a shadow over all of these, now haunting the sugar plantation, now roving in all its fearless outlawry on the very edge of the town, now flying high in the air over some broad stretch of forest, flies hither and

A STREET IN GUANABACOA.

thither over our heads the ubiquitary crow. Although he differs in appearance here somewhat, and is known as the turkey buzzard, he is still the same dusky-hued, independent, feathered bandit that we have seen hovering over the corn-fields of New England, the rice-fields of China and Japan, the marshes of India, the valleys of Europe, the ice-floes of the Arctic zone, or swarming in the equatorial belt of Ceylon.

Although the island is still rich in this feathered population, — creatures of beautiful plumage and melodious song, — many varieties have disap-

peared altogether from the tropics, while others are seldom seen. This is due to those who have hunted the inoffensive and beautiful creatures for their wings or feathers to grace the bonnet of the devotee of fashion. This hunting for these rainbow-hued birds of the Southern lands has continued until some of the islands are entirely without their song or presence. On all of them, they are far less in number than when the Spanish caravels first entered these seas. As a rule, in these regions, birds of plumage are more common than those of sweet melody.

On the other hand, the quadrupeds of the islands, the climate and physical features being favourable, have multiplied, until, from the few domestic animals brought to the place, they have become numerous. Before the insurrection of 1868, horses were so numerous that few travelled on foot. But since then they have been thinned through the ravages of continual war. In the Baracoa district, oxen are used both as the beasts of burden and for driving. Wild horses, as they were once to be found in the savannas, are not to be seen now. It is somewhat singular to find that the horses of the Andalusian race, which have been introduced into Cuba, have lost in size, but have gained in vitality, while being more docile than in their native country. The camel was introduced into the island many years since, but did not thrive, owing to a species of insect which would enter its feet, so as to make it permanently lame. Goats and sheep have also been brought to the island, and these have not done well. The goat has become strangely tamed, while the sheep has had its coat of wool replaced with one of hair.

Santa Clara, on the whole, is not altogether unpleasant, or uninviting. It has, perhaps, some of the finest gardens in the world, one of which, located just outside of Cienfuegos, has been so well pictured by the American traveller, Mr. M. M. Ballou, that his description seems worth quoting in this connection: "Here the mango, with its peach-like foliage, was bending to the ground with the weight of its ripening fruit; the alligator pear was marvellously beautiful in its full blossom, suggesting, in form and colour, the passion-flower; the soft, delicate foliage of the tamarind was like our sensitive-plant; the banana-trees were in full bearing, the deep-green fruit (it is ripened and turns yellow off the tree) being in clusters of a hundred, more or less, tipped at the same time by a single pendant, glutinous bud nearly as large as a pineapple. The date-palm, so

THE ROAD FROM MATANZAS TO THE BELLAMAR CAVES.

suggestive of the Far East, and the only one we had seen in Cuba, was represented by a choice specimen, imported in its youth. There was also a star-apple tree, remarkable for its uniform and graceful shape, full of the green fruit, with here and there a ripening specimen; so, also, was the favourite zapota, its rusty-coated fruit hanging in tempting abundance. From the low, broad-spreading trees depended the grapefruit, as large as an infant's head, and yellow as gold, while the orange, lime, and lemon trees, bearing blossoms, green and ripe fruit all together, met the eye at every turn, and filled the garden with fragrance. The cocoanut-palm,

VILLAGE OF SAN JUAN DE LAS GERAS, PROVINCE OF SANTA CLARA.

with its tall, straight stem and clustering fruit, dominated all the rest. Guava, fig, custard-apple, and breadfruit trees all were in bearing. Our hospitable host plucked freely of the choicest for the benefit of his chance visitors." Was there ever such a fruit garden before, or elsewhere?

We should look for its equal only in the Paradise of the Pacific, and even in that wonderland could not expect a greater variety of the tempting fruits of the most fertile of soils and the rarest of climates, or to find evidence of equal forethought in the cultivation.

No sooner have we passed into the province of Matanzas than we are told that this was the "hotbed of rebellion," and its capital "the nest of insurgents," "the birthplace of patriots."

During the late war we heard frequent mention of the trochas. A trocha is simply a space cleared of all trees and débris, for a width of from one to two hundred yards, the sides being blockaded with a mass of trees, stumps, and brushwood, a barrier almost impossible to pass. The enclosure becomes the site of a series of blockhouses. These are of three kinds, situated so as to constitute a complete form of defence.

A BLOCKHOUSE ON ONE OF THE TROCHAS.

The first and most conspicuous is a two-story stone house, built over a cellar, with a watch-tower above, holding powerful searchlights, and affording to the sentinel on duty a wide view of the surrounding country. The walls of the structure are filled with rifle-holes, and, in some, small field-pieces were placed. A quarter of a mile from this fort is a two-story blockhouse, the lower portion built of stone chinked in with mud, and the upper part constructed of wood. This building is connected with the larger by a series of smaller houses, having iron roofs, and with their

sides boarded up to the height of a man. In these shed-like barracks were from five to ten men, waiting for the enemy that was likely to approach. Between the blockhouses were strung many strands of barbed wire, while at some of the trochas the situation was made more deadly by the concealed bombs. Considering the almost impenetrable jungles surrounding a trocha, and the ominous defence made from within, they presented a somewhat frightful method of warfare.

Some of them were constructed on the line of the railroads, so that troops could be transported from one to another. The cars run on these lines were iron-clad, with sides pierced with rifle-holes. But if the Spaniards placed great confidence in these novel means of defence, they proved not altogether as formidable as might have been expected, for the deep woods encircling one of them afforded capital protection to the enemy creeping upon them unawares, and a determined force concealed in the thickets could maintain a raking fire upon the defenders of the block-houses, doing them even more harm than they could inflict on their outside foes. Something of the extent of this kind of work carried out by the Spanish may be judged from the fact that in the system of the so-called Mariel-Artemisa-Majama, reaching from the fortified houses of the Mariel a little west of Havana, to the border of the Cienga, in the province of Matanzas, a distance of about twenty miles, there were over six hundred of these trochas.

Matanzas, the capital, now next in importance as a seaport to the capital of Cuba, is fifty-four miles east of Havana, by the wagon road, or seventy-five by rail. When Columbus discovered the island, the present site of Matanzas was occupied by a flourishing native village named Yucayo. In 1693 a Spanish hidalgo, named Manzaneda, purchased from Carlos II. a few hectares of land in this vicinity, including the deserted grounds of the Indian town, and settled here thirty families from the Canary Islands. The following day being Sunday, with mass and solemn ceremony the name was changed to San Carlos y San Severino, and on the next day, Monday, the corner-stone was laid for the cathedral and castle of San Severino. Not a very bad example of expediency, considering it was done in a country noted for never doing to-day what might be put off till to-morrow. But this pious name was swallowed up later by that more barbarous one it bears to-day — Matanzas, "the

slaughter-pen." The reason for this name was the fact that its inhabitants obtained their living chiefly by raising and butchering cattle for the market of Havana.

The city is located in one of the most fertile portions of Cuba, between and across two rivers, is hemmed in on the background by picturesque hills, and fronts the sea in the form of a huge crescent. The lofty sentinel of the city, the Monteo del Pan, or "Bread Mountain," is the first land sighted by steamers from the North. The city has better drainage than

THE CHURCH OF MONSERRATE, MATANZAS.

some of the others in Cuba, and thus enjoys better health. The architecture of the dwellings is a mixture mainly of Italian, Grecian, and Moorish, all the buildings being of one story, and pictures of the past rather than the present.

It is connected with Havana by two lines of railroad, on one of which, before the war, were used American-built cars, drawn by American engines, and usually run by American engineers. It may be pertinent to say that railroads were constructed in Cuba before they were in any other of the Spanish colonies. Chinamen are quite common here, as they are elsewhere on the island. They are peaceful and industrious, living on a mere pittance in the dream of returning to their native land at some

MORRO CASTLE.

time, with a sufficient competence to pass the remainder of their lives in ease and comfort.

An object of special interest to the tourists visiting Matanzas is the valley of the Yumuri River, which in some respects reminds us of the Iaoan vale in Maui. But we lack here the massive walls, the towering Needles, the bewildering array of ferns belonging to the other. In their stead we trace a narrow gorge four miles in length, through which flows the river. It is a peaceful retreat, filled with ruined villas and the verdure of a tropical clime, a great variety of trees and flowers, overwatched by sentinel-palms, with their ashen-gray stems and concentric rings. Here are seen in full glow of scarlet blossoms, a tree of matchless shape, and flowering, the Southern jasmine, yellow as gold; the mignonette-tree, fully twenty feet in height, and beside it the delicate *vinca*, in its flowers of intense red and snow-white. Some wild banana-trees throw up their stems and then droop to the earth as if overcome by the effort, and near by, over that tree or shrub, *which* no man can tell, called the "Spanish bayonet," climb a mass of pink, purple, and white flowers that remind us of morning-glories. This romantic valley is believed to have been at some remote period the bed of a lake of considerable size, which burst its bounds on the side toward the sea, and in a single night ran itself out.

More noted than this valley are the caves of Bellamar, which are reached over a rough road of six miles. These consist of a chain of underground rooms, extending for more than three hundred feet. In some of these subterranean apartments are beautiful pictures of natural architecture.

On the Cumbrean hills which overlook this scene, the camp-fires of the insurgents gleamed almost constantly during the nights of Cuba's long struggle for freedom. Another spot in Matanzas of pathetic interest is the Plaza d'Armas, laid out in the usual style of Spanish squares. On this historic spot have perished many of the brave sons of Cuban liberty, not all of whose sufferings have been told to the world. Among the last and the noblest was the unjustly accused poet Placido, whose sad story we have told. A building of especial interest overlooking the plaza is the so-called "palace," whose walls have so often rung with the mirth and chivalry of those receptions given by Cuba's rulers of her richest province.

The building is a large, rambling affair of two stories, of stone, stucco, and adobe, with flat roof, and covered arches or *portales*, as they are called

in Spanish. The ground floor was given up, according to Spanish custom, to the offices of the government, storerooms, soldiers' quarters, stables, kitchens, etc., while the upper floor was devoted to the use of the dignitaries of government. The second story is reached by a flight of wide stone steps, worn into hollows by the many feet that have climbed this way during the three centuries of their existence. Vast apartments, more like halls than living-rooms, are reached, lighted by crystal chandeliers, where, in the centuries gone by, many grand receptions have been given, attended

DRIVE TO THE BELLAMAR CAVES, MATANZAS.

by the beautiful women and the proud men not only of this province, but representatives from old Spain, while in the huge dining-room banquets have been served that for ceremony and dazzling display have probably never been outdone in the New World. Then there are the sleeping-apartments, with their broad expanse of marble floors and their stately bedsteads, the high posts surmounted with brass crowns, curtained and canopied and ruffled in the gorgeous manner of the old country from which they were brought hundreds of years ago, all in keeping with the sublimity of loneliness of the whole interior. It seems like escaping from prison, in spite of all this stately luxury, to get out into the open air, where we can catch a glimpse of the blue bay and a scent of sea breeze.

THE PRADO, LOOKING TOWARD MORRO CASTLE.

CHAPTER IX.

HAVANA.

FROM Matanzas we go by steamer to the one great city of Cuba, its capital, and the leading metropolis of the West Indies, which was at one time believed to be destined to become the capital of the Western world. For this reason it was styled "Llave del Nuevo Mundo," or "Key of the New World." Between the city last described and this Havana toward which we are bound, the coast presents a rolling country, with high hills and mountains in the background, and the stamp of tropical fertility over all. Pan, considered to be the shape of a loaf of bread, hence its name, is the last object to fade from view. Following the northern shore of the island westward, we continue to gaze upon the fertile, undulating lands until we discover, sitting as it first seems on the sea, that picturesque fortification built by Philip II. of Spain, in 1573, which bears the equally picturesque name of Castillo del Morro, or, as we Americans prefer, Morro Castle.

We look in vain for the harbour, where we have been told it was the custom for so many years to drop the signals at sunset and let no one enter after that until another day. A romantic picture is presented by the mighty breast of tawny rock, which has defied the sea for so many ages, and which cuts off the view of the harbour beyond, one of the best, if not the best, in Cuba's long list of harbours, until we come close upon the narrow channel leading to the retreat of water within, and rounding the point of rocks, catch a glimpse of the famous harbour containing a forest of masts, with foliage of innumerable flags. The lighthouse stands like a grim sentinel at this entrance to the notable Spanish capital, where over bristling guns and staffs and signals floated so long the red and yellow ensign of old Spain.

And now the city, standing on the peninsula thrust into the bay from the west, with its houses reaching down so close that we are sure some have already slipped off into the water, rises before our watchful gaze, the famous city of San Cristobal de la Habana, founded in 1519 by Diego Velasquez, the conqueror of Cuba. Winding our way slowly in among the ships of several nations, we at last find anchorage in Regla Bay.

Our view of the capital from the distance is most pleasing and picturesque, but the setting for this Queen of the Island lacks the noble old hills of Matanzas. In the days of peril from sea and land, the city was stoutly walled, like the cities of China, but long since these obstructions have fallen away, and outside of where they stood, a new city had been reared; but the dividing line is plainly preserved in the contrast between the dual portions of the capital. Entering the older quarter, we are surprised to find streets so narrow that it is difficult for one team to pass another; and often for long distances, awnings hung out from houses opposite touch each other, so that we pass under a tent which appears to be without sides or end to the top.

We are impressed by the absence of those striking Spanish garbs we have always associated with the people of this race and with their cousins in these islands of the West Indies — the Spanish hats with their long flowing bands, the cloaks thrown picturesquely over the shoulder, the bright-coloured jackets or waistcoats, the pantaloons opened or slashed below the knee, and the black cravats; but we find here, as in many other places, that the French autocrat of fashion rules in the matter of

PANORAMA OF HAVANA.

dress. The language spoken here, except among the better class, where there is an attempt to preserve the beauty of the old Castilian speech, retains but little of the deep, sonorous, musical, and haughty tone so natural at home, and the soft, languid accent of the women is lost in the quick, unfeeling voice of the Cuban.

The houses are of a uniformly low structure, mostly made of white and yellow stone, or plastered with a stucco of pink or green. But over nearly

HAVANA HARBOUR PROTECTION.

all, and even the vegetation, yellow seems to be the prevailing hue. We are reminded that not long since, over the same streets that we traverse with the curious gaze of strangers, worked, two and two chained together, the poor wretches who were forced to pay the penalty of some crime, real or imaginary, by years of thankless drudgery. Among these impressed workmen were proud Carlists from the old country, fallen hidalgos from Castile, chained, it might be, to some negro slave from the wilds of Africa, equal now in their wretchedness. Each morning these pitiable creatures

were led out to be counted and numbered and marched to their day's dreary toil. Each prisoner had a band of iron riveted to his ankle and another around his waist, with a chain connecting the two, this always dangling and rattling about him whenever he moved, in the same manner in which the Siberian exile was loaded down that he might not escape. At night they were returned to their poor sleeping quarters, to lie down to such rest as could come to them, with their chains still upon them. Their grim lodging-house was the Presidio or "great prison." Some of these were, no doubt, guilty of murder, some of them were petty thieves, some political offenders, and still others charged with the crime (!) of thinking for themselves.

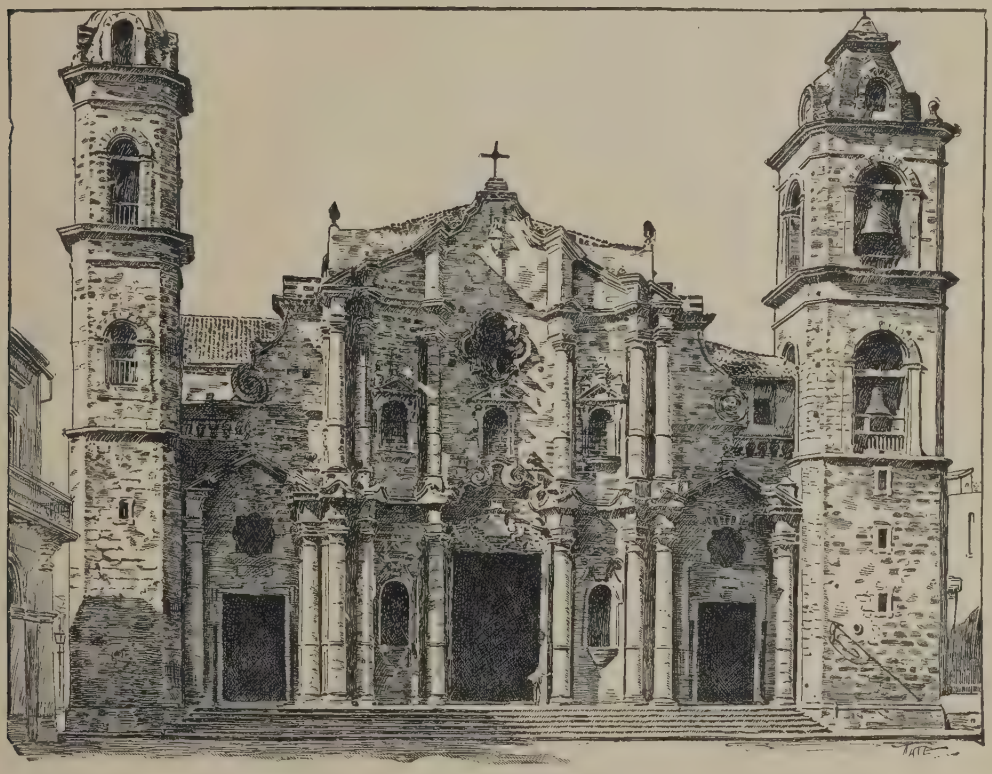
The finest street in Havana is the Cerro, climbing the hill at the rear of the town, along which stand magnificent old villas set in the midst of such gardens as only a tropical country can produce. Not a few of these fine residences have stirring histories, some of them with tragical endings. The most attractive promenade is the Paseo de Tacon, which is sheltered from the midday sun by twin rows of grand old acacias, called the "peacock trees," on account of their enormous tufts of yellow and crimson flowers. This magnificent drive was originated by that ruler of Cuba whose name it bears, and will long remain as his monument.

The chief public buildings are the great yellow palace of the governor-general, on the Plazas de Armas, the palace of the bishop, the cathedral built by the Jesuits in 1704, and the still more ancient church of San Juan de Dios, founded as long ago as 1573. The church of San Felipe is noted for its large library. Though a Catholic city, Havana is not over-supplied with churches. The largest is the Merced, a striking building of the rococo style, having handsome marble altars and beautiful frescoing.

The one among these which would be most likely to attract the visitor is the cathedral, erected by the Jesuits on the site of a much older church built in 1519. The rude, pillared walls of stone, grown over with moss, tell plainly of the age of this one. Two lofty towers are hung with bells, which have rung the matins and the vespers for nearly two hundred years. Some of the bells are relics of days far removed from even this date. The building is of the usual Hispano-American style, possessing in itself little attraction for the foreigner, but compared with most churches of these latitudes, it shows good taste. That which calls the

visitor to its sombre precinct is the fact that it is the tomb of the world's greatest navigator.

All that is to be seen of the sacred spot where the ashes of the illustrious person are supposed to lie, is a marble tablet six or eight feet square in the choir at the right of the altar, surmounted with a bust of the explorer wreathed in laurel. This is not much credit to the artists, and the bombastic inscription underneath is of still less credit to the authors. As is



THE CATHEDRAL OF THE VIRGIN, OLDEST CHURCH IN HAVANA.

well known, or supposed to be known, for history is but an uncertain key to the lock of facts, Columbus died in Valladolid, Spain, on Ascension Day, May 20, 1506. His body was given its first interment in the church of San Francisco, in that city. Seven years later, the remains were removed to Seville, at the monastery of Las Cuevas, and King Ferdinand marked the place with a monument, bearing the following inscription:

"A Castile y Leon,
Nuevo mundo dio Colon."

In 1536 the body of Columbus, with that of his son Diego, was removed to Santo Domingo, or Hayti, and given interment in its principal church. After the island passed into the hands of the French, the Cubans, anxious that the ashes of their great discoverer should repose on Spanish soil, again took up the remains, on the 15th of January, 1796, and this time gave them sepulture in the cathedral at Havana, a very appropriate resting-place. Now that this island has slipped out of the hands of Spain, will she again, one asks himself, desire to move the ashes of the famous man?

It will not be out of place to mention that it is claimed, on what seems to be good evidence, that the ashes of Columbus were not removed from Santo Domingo, but that the priests there substituted another body for it. But this matters little.

Perhaps the most pleasing feature about this cathedral of La Virgin Maria de la Concepcion, is the view one can obtain from the top of its high bell-tower. The old bell ringer, who has spent all of the best years of his life in this narrow eyrie, delights to descant on the venerable appearance of the bells around him. The one on the right is dated 1664, and another 1698, with the imprint of London now nearly effaced. What awakenings of joy and sorrow, of peace and war, of birth, marriage, and death, these messengers have sent abroad! Now, some sail having been sighted on the distant seas, have they sounded the alarm of danger; anon a stirring call to arms; now, peace once more has settled triumphantly over the island, ringing out its grand proclamation of victory; then, some one dying high in the affairs of government, the bells have slowly tolled their sorrow; or for some happy bridal train have pealed forth their notes of gladness; and ever, through these shifting scenes of lights and shadows, have they called regularly their pious followers to matins and to vespers — now rung by youth with a life of hope before him, now by an old man, grown gray with the years and the accumulations of time's burdens — for nearly three centuries of change.

The first glance surprises us by the vast level of the roof-tops, all the houses seeming to be of the same height. If it is early in the morning when we take our observations, we shall see many of these made the scene of activity on the part of the laundress; but if it is in the evening, under the deep blue of the sky studded with stars, we shall find these

AT THE BOAT LANDING.

same places alive with the merry dancers and musicians of a pleasure party. Again there may be wafted the martial strains of a military band playing in the Plaza de Isabella.

Few Cuban windows have glass in them, and the best, as well as the poorest, share alike in this respect. Broad, projecting windows, reaching from floor to ceiling, afford both light and fresh air, but do not protect the inmates from the gaze of the curious passer-by. As fresh air, and not

HAVANA HOUSE TOPS.

privacy, is what is sought in Cuba, the end desired seems to have been acquired. A prison-like effect is given these windows by stout horizontal bars holding them in place. Occasionally, but rarely, loose lace curtains make a pretence of shutting out the vision of the outsider. Instead of knocking before entering a house, as we do, it is customary to speak. Within the house we find it quite as destitute of doors as it is of windows, according to our ideas, the apartments being divided by curtains. Should there be a partition between the rooms, it would not reach higher than a

man's head, lest it should cut off the circulation of air. The result of this constant living in the fresh air is shown by the Cubans, who really live out of doors more than under cover, in their broad chests, and generally healthy physiques.

Something like three miles outside of the city is a high enclosure marked by pits, in which the coffins of the wealthy citizens are placed. The poor are not blessed with even this small show of burial, and if they are very poor, or are coloured, several bodies may be dumped together in a trench, quicklime being sprinkled over them to hasten decomposition.

Now our gaze is arrested by the sight of a funeral-train moving toward the great burying-spot, Campo Santo. The hearse, gilded and bedecked like a Juggernaut car, is driven by a flashily dressed person, who seems to feel himself of great account. His dress fairly glistens with brass buttons and bright-coloured ornaments, he has a cocked hat surrounded with a gilt braid, and his feet are encased in bright-topped boots, which, as he sits, half crouching, come nearly to his chin. In one hand he swings a prodigious whip almost constantly over the horses that pay little or no attention to it. Twelve hired mourners march in even numbers on each side of the hearse, all dressed in black, with swallow-tailed coats, and cocked hats wound around with braid. Then follow the victorias containing the mourners, whose grief is supposed to be genuine, but all of whom, in company with the driver and hired flunkeys, are smoking cigars at a terrific rate.

There is another place of even more melancholy interest than the Campo Santo, and that is the spot protected from the public gaze by a high fence. It is where slaves were brought in the old days to be punished for offending their masters, and where the victim, male or female, was stripped and inhumanly flogged. Neither did this unhappy place fall into disuse with the freedom of the slaves, and although the poor wretches were cut off from sight, their cries of torture have often been heard outside.

A pleasanter place to visit is the celebrated Botanical Garden. One cannot get a better illustration of the wonderful fertility of the soil and the remarkable exuberance of its floral offerings than by visiting this locality in New Havana, which has so eclipsed the old section of the

Cuban capital. The grounds, shaded by stately tropical trees and flowers nearly as lofty, the margins of the small lake and waterways, are decked with gorgeous flowers, prominent among which is to be seen the water-rose, whose pink blossoms are twice the size of our pond-lily, and remind us of the eastern lotus. But unlike our northern gardens, this is never in its full glory at one time, only one portion making beautiful the scene;

THE CHAPEL IN THE CAMPO SANTO, THE CHIEF CEMETERY, HAVANA.

to-day it may be the roses and the heliotropes, to-morrow the star cactus, springing into full blossom from scarlet buds starting from the flat surface of the thick leaves; it may be the crimson hibiscisand, the galan de noche, growing like a palm-tree to a height greater than the tallest man, with its rounded crest drooping with clusters of brown blossoms touched with white. This modestly blooms by night, and loses its fragrance when sunlight succeeds the moonlight and the stars. These reach along walks of noble palms and the wonderful freak of tropical nature, the coral

tree, its graceful stem topped with pendant leaves and a form resembling the familiar sea growth, — a vegetable coral of an intense red. Then there is the Carolina-tree, resplendent in its blazing blossoms and dense foliage, besides other tropical and exotic varieties, too numerous to mention.

TACON THEATRE AND INGLATERRA HOTEL.

THE PRADO, HAVANA.

CHAPTER X.

THE RULERS OF CUBA.

HAVANA, like all the rest of Cuba, has had a checkered history. The first governor or captain-general located here was Juan de Tejada, who made this his capital in 1589. This city fared better at the hands of the buccaneers than did Santiago, but in 1638 a French pirate captured and nearly destroyed the town. Some years later it again suffered from the blighting touch of the sea-rovers, this time assisted by some disaffected Spaniards.

The most important seizure of the city was made by the English in 1762, assisted by about five thousand New England troops. This was soon after the British army, aided materially by the New England Rangers, had effected the capture of Quebec. French power, by this victory, ended on the continent of America, Spain audaciously declared war against Great Britain. Aroused by the spirit of Chatham, Parliament sent Lord Albe-

marle on the 5th of March to attack Havana, the capital of Cuba. This expedition was joined by five thousand men from the colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut, among whom were Israel Putnam and General Lyman, the leader of the contingent, and other Americans afterward noted in the War of the Revolution.

So prompt were the British and their allies in this movement that they reached Havana before the news that war had been declared had been sent to the island. This was on the 7th of June, and the Cubans made a defence which prolonged the struggle until the 13th of August, when the island government capitulated. This placed in the possession of the British the city of Havana and an area of 180 miles eastward, including Matanzas, and on the west all of the territory to the sea. Nine ships of the line, of seventy-four and sixty-four guns, two very large ships on the stocks, about twenty-five loaded merchant vessels, nearly $3,000,000 belonging to the King and Royal Company, cannon, great magazine stores, and merchandise of all kinds fell into the hands of the victors. On the 14th of August General Keppel took possession of Fort la Punta, and, about noon, of the Punta gate and bastion, while at the same time Brigadier Howe held the land gate, and the British colours were hoisted at the places. Before the day closed, every Spanish ship in the harbour was flying the flag of England.

According to the terms of peace in 1763, Cuba was restored to Spain, but it is a singular fact that this disaster to Havana proved to be a blessing in disguise. Under the brief British rule, the city suddenly awoke to its possibilities. Although the foreigners had destroyed much property, and had laid in waste sections that had enjoyed fair prosperity before their coming, they taught the indolent inhabitants how speedily to repair these losses, and how to increase their prosperity. The port of Havana, which had been boastful of the visits of half a dozen European ships during a year, were now amazed to see a thousand foreign vessels entering the bay, and from that time it became a commercial port of importance.

At this period, and for some time after, Cuba was denominated by Spain as the "Ever Faithful Isle," but already a spirit of discontent became apparent among some of her inhabitants. The independence gained by the American colonies, abetted to a certain extent by both Cubans and

Spaniards, awakened some of the former to the possibility that might come to their land.

Cuba was governed from the first by men sent out from Spain, under the title of captain-general, and the government was really a military despotism. The ruler was invested with unlimited power, and accountable only to the reigning sovereign at home, over three thousand miles away. With such absolute power in his hands, able to hold the life of his greatest

PRINCIPE CASTLE, HAVANA.

as well as his lowest subject at his will, sending one into exile and the other to death, able even to amend the laws to suit his own purpose, it is easy to see that gigantic wrongs were likely to follow. Few men of the times and training of those who stood in this despotic place could come out of the ordeal as pure and unselfish as they went into it. At least, that was the case with the viceroys of Cuba. The position was a prize for which men struggled, planned, and schemed, it may be, for a lifetime, and may have bought it at last at a high price. But no matter

what the price paid, or how poor he became in getting it, no governor of Cuba ever went back to his native land without carrying with him ample riches. Each knew his chance for holding his situation was limited, and few ever thought to make it pleasant or profitable for his subjects. His nominal salary was fifty thousand dollars, with a palace for his abode given him, and as many attendants as he desired.

If such rulers, as a whole, gave their subjects reason for discontent and revolution, the darkest list of characters affords at places the name of some patriot, whose love of justice throws bars of light over the obscurity of his colleagues. Even Cuba is not barren of such names. One of these true patriots was Don Luis de las Casas, whose memory is still cherished in the hearts of those faithful to Cuba. Another is Don Francisco de Arrango, who was born at Havana, but educated in Spain. Understanding the possibilities of his native island, he set about to accomplish the most good that he could. He succeeded so well that, from being a losing factor in the colonies of Spain, it more than paid its way, notwithstanding the prodigal manner in which the government was conducted. It was due to him that the duty on cotton, coffee, and spirits was removed for a period of ten years, and machinery to run the sugar plantations was admitted free from the United States. The service of this patriot was so well appreciated in Spain that he was offered a title of nobility, but declined it on the ground that, while titles might be at the disposal of kings, only God could make a true nobleman. Through his efforts, Cuba was represented in the general Cortes at Madrid, and there he attained the golden prize of his long and useful life by causing the ports of the island to be opened to foreign trade. He opposed slavery, though he did not believe it practicable to abolish slaves at once. He died in 1837, ripe with honours, and bequeathing large sums of money for the benefit of what he considered the public good.

Among the rulers of Cuba none has left a wider or more lasting memory than Tacon, the governor-general at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Seeing the dark cloud hanging over his island empire, and realising that only a strong hand and unflinching courage could lift it up from the slough into which it had sunk through a long era of misrule, he set about making reforms, purifying the offices under him, and even rebuilding cities, that they might be brought into safer and better conditions for

COUNTRY OX-CARTS.

living. He boldly made war upon the gambling-dens, which were such a curse to the cities, suppressing the national game of *monte*, and to carry out his purpose established a police force to maintain the laws he demanded. He improved the capital by giving it a system of lighting, and a well-ordered fire department. Thus, out of the chaos of government, and the shameful moral condition of the people, he evolved a code of government and a standard of society that stand out as a marked

THE ALMENDARES RIVER, HAVANA.

example of what one man could do even in that period, and in a country reeking with the festering sores of nearly three hundred years of misrule.

Still, even Tacon was far from perfect, and, though it be said to his shame, it must be admitted that he encouraged slavery to a greater extent than any one before him. This was partly due to the fact that his extensive improvements made all over the island, and the marvellous impetus given to all enterprises under his energetic government, called for more labour. The sugar industry, in one line, demanded the negro

help to carry on the broad plantations, and, in less than a decade, over one hundred thousand of this race were imported into Cuba. Brought from the wilds of Africa in their savage condition, no thought was given to civilising them, and from them and their descendants have come much of the troubles which have given the island the unenviable reputation of being the land of revolutions. The evil effect of this sudden influx of a foreign people, utterly incapable of understanding the principles of government, was shown in 1812, when a league of these negroes rebelled, and a bitter struggle followed. The revolt was finally put down, but not until the leader and eight of his followers were hanged, and hundreds of others killed, while a still greater number fled to the wilderness of the interior, there to perish of want, or to become no better than wild beasts, preying upon whomever and whatever crossed their paths.

The character of Tacon, called by his admirers "the Just," by his detractors "the Tyrant," is illustrated by the story of the boatman on the waters between the Punta and Morro Castle and his dusky sweetheart. His name was Pedro Mantanez, and he is described as a lusty, good-looking, courageous youth, above his companions in intelligence and habits. As he pulled his oars back and forth on his course he eased his labour with merry songs, for love made his heart light and his arm strong.

Miralda Estales, the maid of Pedro's choice, was in every way worthy of his confidence and affection. She has been described as a happy picture of tropical beauty, — a matchless face touched with the soft tint of olive, large, languid eyes, lips that vied with the cherry in their brightness, and which, whenever she smiled, and this was frequently, parted to display twin rows of pearls. These features, together with a figure rich in its womanly outlines, were united to a charm of manner known only to the young and cheerful, who have not a care in life. Naturally she had many admirers, but she treated them all alike, except in the case of her Pedro, whom she loved with a Southern constancy. She kept a small cigar store, and during the first year of Tacon's rule she attracted the attention of a certain Spanish nobleman, as he delighted to call himself, — and which indeed he was, if high birth is the true criterion of man's estate, — but a despicable profligate according to his manner of life.

Let that be as it will, Count Almonte soon found his way to the store of the pretty creole who sold cigars to support herself, both of her parents

being dead. Attracted, as many others had been, by her native grace and beauty, it was not long before the count confessed his passion for her, and besought her to share with him his fine estate just outside of the city. But Miralda politely declined his offer, and the surprised suitor went his way, to devise some other method by which he could gain the beautiful cigar vender.

This he did by sending some of his faithful followers to entice the maid

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S PALACE, HAVANA.

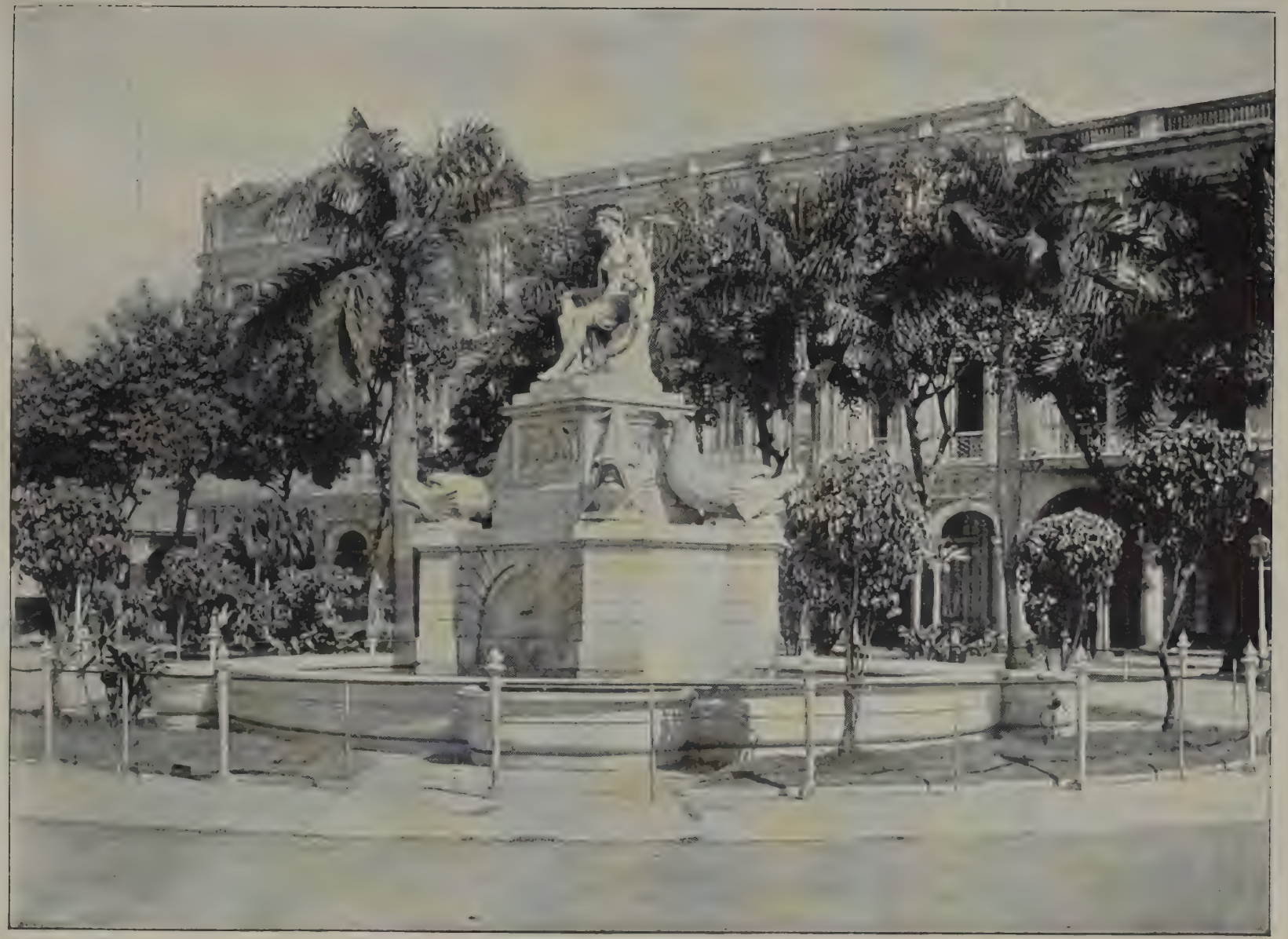
to his place, and she, never suspecting harm until it was too late, found herself at his door, to be met by him with the declaration that she should never be allowed her personal liberty until she had promised to become the mistress of his home. This met with a scornful refusal from her, and she defiantly accused him of his treachery. Though she had met her captor with proud defiance, she realised that she was helpless in her situation. Neither could she reasonably expect that the humble Pedro could successfully combat the powerful count in his intrigue. In this hopeless

situation, she guarded with uncommon watchfulness the slender stiletto that she had been in the habit of carrying about her store. At night she lay down to sleep with this in her bosom, knowing that it alone might save her at last from the power of Count Almonte, in case all else failed.

Meanwhile Pedro soon learned of her disappearance, and tracking his enemy down, he eventually came to realise that his loved one was in the hands of a powerful and unscrupulous enemy. Disguising himself as a friar of the order of San Felipe, then strong and numerous in Havana, he hovered about the gates of the villa of the count, until he was rewarded

LA FUERZA, ONE OF THE OLDEST BUILDINGS IN HAVANA, ERECTED IN 1573.

by a short consultation with Miralda. This brief interview gave the lovers new hope, and while his sweetheart rested more calmly than before, the faithful Pedro sought the only man on the island, or in the world it might be, who could help him. But would Tacon do it? Could he awaken an interest in himself and his pretty maid in the mind of the nobleman, busy with his affairs of government? If he did, was there any reason for him to think that Tacon would lift a hand against so powerful a subject as the count, who was also a nobleman? These questions frightened the desperate Pedro, but he did not despair, while he tried over and again to gain an audience with the governor-general. Tacon was noted



THE INDIAN STATUE ON THE PRADO.

for his justness, and if he could get him to listen to his story, he must be made to help him.

With this determination in his spirit, Pedro persevered until finally he found himself in the august presence of his ruler. Standing up boldly before the scowling listener, he told in a straightforward manner the story of the abduction of the beautiful girl.

"Is the maid your sister, that you come to me with this bold story that looks so preposterous on its face?"

"Nay, your Excelencia, she is dearer to me than even a sister; she is my betrothed wife."

Without showing how this bit of news was considered by him, Tacon bade the humble boatman come nearer, and handing him a golden cross that he took from a table, he said, sternly:

"Swear to me that what you have said is true, or go your way, as you hope for heaven."

Kissing the emblem with deep veneration, Pedro replied:

"I swear to every word of it, your Excelencia."

"Retire to the room at your right, and remain there until you are called for."

Fearful that he had gained nothing by his rashness, but rather jeopardised his own safety, Pedro did as he was commanded, and passed the most miserable two hours of his life. When he was summoned forth, he found that the count and Miralda had been ordered into the presence of the governor. As he was ushered into the apartment, Tacon was saying:

"Need I explain to you, Count Almonte, the reason of the order for your appearance before me at this time?"

"I hope I have not committed any serious indiscretion, Excelencia."

"You caused this girl to be taken from her home, and have kept her away against her will?"

"I meant her no harm, Excelencia. I—" stammered the count.

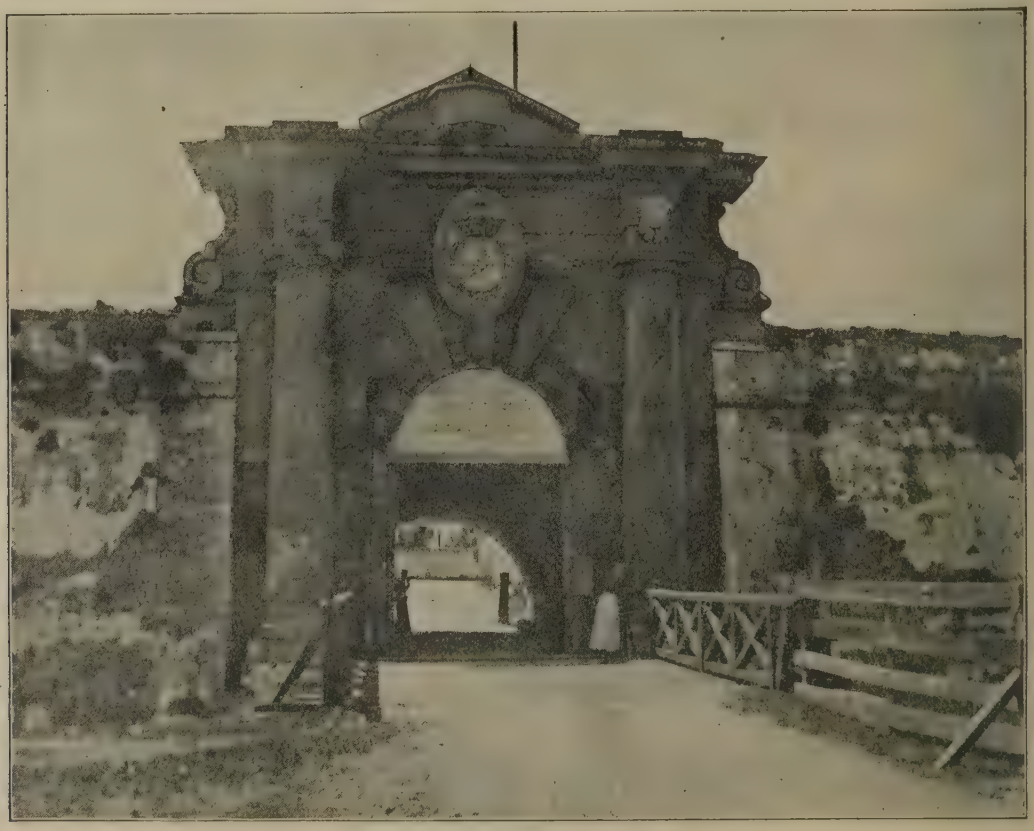
"Can you declare on your honour that she has not been harmed while in your power?"

"I can, Excelencia."

The governor then turned to his table, and, after writing a few lines, touched a bell, when one of his pages appeared. Handing the latter the paper, he bade him hasten on his errand. Then Tacon asked Pedro a few

questions relative to his condition and aspirations in life. In the midst of the questions the page returned, accompanied by a monk of the church of Santa Clara, wearing the emblems of his high office. Addressing him, Tacon said:

"Holy father, I have summoned you that you may join in wedlock Count Almonte and Miralda Estales."



DRAWBRIDGE AT CABANAS FORTRESS.

Pedro turned pale with horror, while the count lost quite as much colour for another reason, while he stammered:

"Your Excelencia, I pray you what does this mean?"

"That you are to obey!" replied the governor, ignoring Pedro and the fear and trembling of the poor girl, while he looked sternly upon the count.

"Is my nobility—" began the count, when Tacon interrupted by saying:

"Has no claim upon me. Proceed, good father, with the ceremony."

Then, amid a profound silence on the part of those who had suffered so much, the ceremony was performed which made Count Almonte and Miralda Estales man and wife. Pedro could not see for the tears that filled his eyes, while a terrible noise in his head seemed to deaden all sounds. The governor again had recourse to his table, and quickly writing another order, he handed this to the captain of the guards, who immediately left his presence. Pedro and Miralda were then ordered into

BRINGING HAY TO TOWN.

the adjoining apartment, there to await further orders, while the trembling count was told that he might return to his plantation, accompanied by a single attendant.

At a loss to understand what was in store for him, Count Almonte mounted his horse and rode away as directed. But he had barely passed the city gate when a volley of musketry rattled about his head, and he fell forward upon the withers of his horse, and slipped to the ground lifeless. After seeing that his body was removed, the captain of the guard made an

entry of the deed upon his book, and mounting his own horse dashed back to the governor's palace to announce the fact of the death of Count Almonte. Upon hearing this, Tacon said:

"Very well. Now proclaim in the customary way the marriage of Count Almonte and Miralda Estales, that she may acquire his titles and estates, which as his widow she is entitled to. See this order is carried out strictly to the letter."

Then, again summoning the bewildered lovers into his presence, he bade them be of good cheer, and instructed them to appoint their marriage day as soon as the settlement of the count's estate was under way, ending by saying:

"Let it be ever borne in mind by all that no man or woman under his government is so poor or humble that they may not receive justice from the hand of Tacon."

It would be unfair to Havana, and the western provinces of which she is the centre, not to mention some of her eminent literary men, as well as her military heroes. Prose writers, owing to the rigid censorship of the press, have never made any great mark in Cuba, though a few historians have left some good work, but poetry seems to have been the natural outlet of the pent-up sentiments of a race that is of a highly emotional temperament. Among the poets was Don José de la Luz y Caballeo, who, like the majority of verse-writers, espoused the cause of the insurgents, and was killed in an engagement at Bayamo under Cespedes in 1866. He was also the author of a valuable work on Cuban folk-lore. A lyrist of great talent was Ramon Zambrana, and a gifted poetess was Dona Luisa de Oca, who wrote under a masculine *nom de plume*. A pretty love romance is told of this couple, who were married just before the former's death. Supposing from her assumed name that she was a man, he wrote her, and a correspondence lasting over a year followed before he discovered his error. She had inadvertently enclosed a milliner's bill in her note. Seizing upon this surprising clue, he hastened to learn whether his suspicions, at last aroused, were founded in fact, and the result of the meeting was a wedding in due course of time. But already the seeds of disease had entered his system, and he did not live long to enjoy his happy alliance with one of the fairest as well as most gifted daughters of Cuba.

THE CATHEDRAL.

CUBAN IRRIGATING-DITCH.

CHAPTER XI.

STRUGGLES FOR INDEPENDENCE.

THE first real revolt against the government in Cuba occurred in 1823, when Simon Bolivar offered to throw an invading force into the island to aid the disaffected party. In 1826 another attempt to throw off the yoke of Spanish despotism took place, and two years later, in 1828, a third revolution was undertaken with slight prospect of success.

Then the fire of revolution slumbered for twenty years, when, in 1848, Gen. Narciso Lopez became the leader of a conspiracy formed at Trinidad and Cienfuegos to assert Cuban independence. He was a Venezuelan by birth, and after a futile attack was obliged to flee the country to save his life. About this time President Polk made a proposition to purchase the island at the price of $100,000,000, which offer was

scornfully refused by the power at Madrid.[1] Movements of annexation to the United States had been agitated for some time previously on the island. In 1850 Lopez returned to Cuba, to make a well-ordered descent on his enemies, winning his first battle. But the Cubans were timid in lending their assistance, and failing to rally around him as had been expected he was finally captured and sentenced to be shot. This was the best-laid scheme and the most ably led of the many that stirred the island for a long period. General Lopez was fifty-two at the time of his death, and his memory is cherished as that of one of the patriots of Cuba.

During another twenty years, annexation was talked of, and more or less bitter feelings were aroused between the Spanish rulers and certain of their subjects, but no outbreak took place of sufficient account to be mentioned, until another revolution under the leadership of Carlos Manuel de Cespedes was begun; it lengthened into what might be called civil war for eight years. This able patriot began operations with less than fifty men, and by declaring his plantation independent in October, 1868. In a little over a month he found himself at the head of an army of twelve thousand men, poorly armed and equipped, it is true, but every man of them determined and desperate in their purpose. So well was this insurrection carried out, and so stubbornly fought, that the island, between Santiago and Cienfuegos, was practically in their hands. Many lives were lost on both sides, and a vast amount of property was destroyed. Particularly was the loss of lives heavy on the part of the government troops, it being acknowledged in one of the Cortes at Madrid that of 145,000 soldiers sent to Cuba, not enough returned to fill a respectable regiment! The warfare was maintained on the part of the rebels by guerrilla tactics, against which the best drilled troops of Europe could not cope successfully. The climate, too, was more deadly than the bullets of the concealed insurgents. So Spain lost more than 150,000 men in all, miles on miles of once thrifty plantations were laid in waste, from which they have not yet recovered, while the business of the island was crippled so that it has never rallied from the blow.

Neither party winning an absolute victory, from that time forward

[1] It should be added that this offer contained the agreement that an armistice should be proclaimed until terms of peace could be arranged, and that America was to abolish slavery and declare the independence of the island.

another twenty years of predatory warfare was waged at intervals, until the sod of fair Cuba was deluged with blood, its native inhabitants had become refugees, and the forests were filled with runaway slaves, escaped criminals, and that class known as insurgents. Such warfare calls forth the worst passions in the human breast, and the years of bitter struggle are filled with the record of cruel deeds and acts of atrocity which the pen recoils from depicting. The natural features of the island are such as to favour this method of fighting, and the very nature and training of the inhabitants had been such as to abet it.

The independence of the island was declared in April, 1869, and Cespedes was chosen president of the "Cuban Republic." Slavery was

OUTSKIRTS OF GOMEZ'S CAMP.

abolished and other reforms begun. Four years later, Cespedes was deposed, to be soon after assassinated, as it was supposed, by a Spaniard, and Salvador Cisneros y Betancourt was proclaimed president. Then took place a disgraceful affair which aroused the indignation of the United States. The officers and crew of a wandering steamer, known as the *Virginius*, and bearing the American flag, were captured, and tried as pirates, and in less than a week over fifty men had been put to death on this absurd charge. Many of the victims of this foolish piece of misapplied vengeance were Americans, and this country was so aroused that an indemnity was eventually paid by Spain of $80,000. But the wound never healed. The untimely fate of Cespedes had caused a faltering on the part of the insurgents, but the unfortunate warfare was maintained in such a cruel manner that in 1875 the United States

government announced to the power at Madrid that, while refusing to recognise the insurgent government, it felt in duty bound, as concerned its own interests as well as those of humanity, to demand that hostilities be brought to a close. Spain now hastened to end the war, and in February, 1878, the Treaty of El Zanjon was accomplished. By this a general amnesty was given the surviving insurgents with the privilege of leaving the island without interference. Political privileges were also granted, though these were empty of good to the insurgents.

In fact, matters grew from bad to worse. The enormous expense of the war was placed upon Cuba, and the debt of $3,000,000 in 1864 was swelled to nearly $200,000,000. Official corruption increased rather than diminished, until it was acknowledged that the frauds of the custom-

THE PRISON AND FORTRESS OF CABANAS.

house alone amounted in 1895 to $100,000,000. It would seem as if the Spanish officials were determined to drive the oppressed people to despair. With the downfall of the Cespedes revolt, it truly seemed as though enough spirit and strength were not left to sustain another revolution. But the Spanish ignored the large number of fugitives and exiles in other lands who still had the interest of their native isle at heart. There were forty thousand of these outcasts in the United States, and in 1895 there were claimed to be 145 societies or juntas, which had been formed with the expressed object of aiding the insurgents in getting their freedom. The leader of these organisations was José Marti, a Cuban by birth, educated in Spain, but a resident for a time of the United States. On February 24, 1895, an expedition of three vessels was planned

A PINEAPPLE PLANTATION.

to leave Fernandina, Florida, but was prevented by the United States authorities. Marti then proceeded to Cuba, to act with Gen. Maximo Gomez and others in trying to bring about independence. Among the new leaders were two brothers named Antonio and José Maceo, who were mulattoes. This revolt had its real strength in the province of Santiago, but did not make great headway. Then it received a serious setback by the death of its leading spirit, Marti. Undismayed by this, the insurgents rallied, and on September 13, 1895, declared again the independence of Cuba, and a provisional constitution was adopted. The

GATE OF THE CRISTOBAL COLON CEMETERY, HAVANA.

venerable Cisneros y Betancourt, whom we have mentioned before, was chosen president, and Maximo Gomez made the head of the army, and Antonio Maceo second, under the commission of lieutenant-general. The capital was established at the town of Cubitas, situated in the mountainous heart of the province of Puerto Principe.

For a time the insurgents were successful, gaining a victory near Bayamo against the forces of Campos, and killing General Santocildes, at the head of the Spanish troops. Additions were made to their ranks by troops from Jamaica and Key West. Then General Campos, realising he had no small task on hand, began to restore the old trochas and build

new ones. The timber was cleared for a pathway across the province of Puerto Principe, from Jucaro to Moron, and a series of ambushes were laid the entire distance, in the expectation of confining the depredations of the insurgents to the eastern division of the island. Along this formidable line of defence fifty thousand troops were stationed. The undaunted insurgents now divided, or at least did not try to concentrate their forces, but in small bodies managed to pass this line of trocha, and, crossing the province of Santa Clara, to enter that of Matanzas. Gaining in numbers, either by voluntary enlistment or by coercion, these rebels actually reached within twelve miles of Havana at the opening of the year 1896, and formed a force of almost twelve thousand men. Maceo advanced with a force of four thousand men into the province of Pinar del Rio on the extreme west, and Gomez desolated the plantations of the middle provinces, until the Spanish army was in danger of being starved out.

It was in vain that Campos could devise any campaign that would prove effectual against his enemies, for the reason that their irregular actions utterly defied any systematic defence or aggression. Campos was recalled as unable to cope with the situation, and finally General Weyler, of unpleasant notoriety gained during his campaign, succeeded to the command of the Spanish troops. His predecessor, General Marin, had established a line of trocha, one of the most noted, across the province of Pinar del Rio, from Puerto de Mariel to Majana Bay. Now reports of all natures were sent abroad. News of victories where battles were never fought, and peace where war raged in its most terrible form, was widely disseminated, until no one, not even Weyler himself, knew how the situation stood, except that it was of inhuman desolation and bloodshed. If it was raiding on the part of the insurgents, it was raiding also on the part of their enemies, until the fight of the Kilkenny cats seemed to be repeated.

In the midst of this warfare, Maceo, after crossing the line of Mariel-Majana trocha and rallying the insurgents in the provinces of Matanzas and Havana, was killed in a skirmish, a tragedy which cast such a gloom over the spirits of the rebels that they never fully rallied from it.

In November, 1897, Gen. Ramon Blanco superseded Weyler as governor-general, and aware that already the United States government

was awakening to the situation, he adopted more pacific methods. But it was a desperate situation on the island. General Gomez was still at the head of the insurgents' army, with Calixto Garcia lieutenant-general. They held the eastern division of the island, except the district of Santiago and two other interior towns, with more or less footing in the west. But, while the Spanish were in such a critical position, the hold of the insurgents was slowly slipping away. In the United States

SHIPPING TOBACCO, HAVANA.

there was a strong inclination to interfere, and President McKinley, in his annual message of 1897, following in the line of his predecessor, President Cleveland, declared the time seemed approaching when armed intervention "shall appear to be a duty imposed upon us by our obligations to ourselves, to civilisation, and humanity, — but only when the necessity for such action will be so clear as to command the support and approval of the civilised world."

The impending crisis came on the 15th of February, 1898, when the

The great naval victories of Manila and Santiago, followed by the success of the armies on the land, all of which have been described in this work, paved the way to complete American triumph, and the signing of the peace protocol at Washington on the 12th of August, 1898, when hostilities ceased on both sides. This was followed by the treaty of peace, signed at Paris on the 10th of December, 1898, by which "Spain relinquishes all claim of sovereignty over the title of Cuba. And as the island is, upon its evacuation by Spain, to be occupied by the United States, the United States will, so long as such occupation shall last, assume and discharge the obligations that may under international law result from the fact of its occupation, for the protection of life and property."

PLOUGHING IN CUBA.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LAND OF PROMISE.

SO, after four centuries of oppression and bloodshed, of suffering and humiliation, such as few countries have had thrust upon them, at the sacrifice and extinction of one race, the bondage and slow dying-out of a second, and the trial of a third in a fiery furnace of human events, Cuba to-day looks out from her sunny shores to the rising of the sun of the twentieth century, with bosom aflame with hope and new life. She has suffered much, she has learned much, she has yet more to learn. Her education has been such as to unfit her really for the responsibilities she is so anxious to assume.

As soon as the certainty of peace had been assured, delegates from the six corps of the Cuban army, representing also the six provinces of the island, met at Santa Cruz, October 24th, to formulate the organisation of a government. In the early part of the following month, the officers of the provisional government resigned, and Rafael M. Portuondo was

chosen to take charge of affairs until the permanent government should be established, and four others were appointed as a committee to assist him. The first duty of this body was to dismiss the Cuban army, and to prepare the people to submit peacefully to the new power soon to assume control of the government. If there were those who felt disappointed in not immediately establishing that self-government so long dreamed of, and so hopelessly fought for, the counsel of wiser men prevailed. Before the organisation of a permanent civil authority, the chairman of this committee was succeeded by the ex-vice-president of the Cuban republic, Domingo Mendez Capote. A commission of five members, Gen. Calixto Garcia as its leader, was selected to visit Washington in the interest of Cuba.

The conduct of the United States in administering Cuban affairs has been directly opposite from that of Spain. So far as it was thought practicable to do so, native Cubans were allowed to assist in the government. The occupation of the island was necessarily of a military form, but this has been conducted with as little show of absolute rule as possible. Gen. Leonard Wood, who was appointed military governor of Santiago, and then of the province by that name, as already mentioned, eventually became governor-general of the island.

During his administration of affairs a decided advance has been made in the situation of Cuba. The people are beginning to feel that they have individual rights of which they knew nothing under Spanish rule. Though the island had been severely ravaged and desolated under the long and bitter strife, it has made rapid strides toward recovery. Not only have many of the homeless inhabitants, at the close of the war, found for themselves new homes, but others have done much toward restoring theirs to more than their old-time comfort and prosperity. One of the best innovations made by the Americans has been the improvement, or, as it might better be said, the introduction, of sanitary methods. In all of the cities and towns, street-cleaning and modern sewerage have done much toward removing those distressing diseases that have given Cuba so much trouble, and kept so many from its shores. Road improvement is another thing which has received a decided impetus. The opening of new roads, and the repairs on old ones are already doing much toward helping forward the crushed and bleeding

island. While the main source of income should naturally arise from the pursuit of agriculture, and, such has been the result, it has come from the fertility of the soil in spite of the slipshod methods of working the land, and a routine that has been opposed to progress. The sugar plantations, with their buildings and mills for refining sugar, and for the distillation of rum, have furnished the most important industrial pursuit. The scale upon which these plantations have been conducted is shown by the fact that their area ranges from five hundred to ten thousand acres. The long period of internal strife tended to lessen the output, while the growth of the sugar-beet in other countries has seriously inter-

A CUBAN FARM WAGON.

fered with the industry. The yield in 1894–95 was 1,040,000 tons, to which should be added an estimated amount of forty thousand tons of molasses. About seventy-five per cent. of the sugar grown in Cuba finds a market in the United States, the larger part of the remainder, or about fifteen per cent., going to Europe.

In 1748, the cultivation of coffee was begun, and this proved so profitable that a large quantity of the berry was sent from Cuba. But the amount began to fall off more than a quarter of a century ago, so that coffee does not figure very high in the matter of exports.

Tobacco is of greater account from a financial point of view, and the export trade of this natural product reached, before the war, 250,000 bales and 167,000,000 cigars in a year. Cuban tobacco is celebrated for

its excellent quality the world over, the best being that grown in the country west of Havana, known as "Vuelta Abajo."

There were in Cuba, before the war, 1,000 coffee plantations, 1,500 sugar-cane plantations, 3,350 breeding farms, 9,500 tobacco fields, 2,300 bee farms, besides cotton plantations and fruit and vegetable farms, making a total of over 100,000 city and 30,000 country estates. But there are no manufacturing industries on the island worth mentioning.

TOBACCO DRYING HOUSE.

As an illustration of the progress in the direction of agriculture, which may be said to be fairly reconstructed, and on the highroad to prosperity, we can do no better than to quote General Wood's own words: "The tobacco crop for this year (1900) was one of the largest in the history of the island. The sugar production will be about 550,000 tons, and, at the present market price, it will yield a return equal to that received for larger crops in the past. Coffee growing is coming into favour, as also cocoa cultivation. Mining industries are developing rapidly, espe-

cially in the two easternmost provinces, where high-grade iron ores are abundant, as also copper and manganese. Santiago province has an enormous amount of valuable timber. The island's commerce is growing steadily. From one end of the island to the other, labour is in great demand. The plantations are being equipped with proper machinery on the most liberal scale. Land in the eastern province is still cheap." No better illustration of the improved condition of the island is needed than the fact that Spanish immigrants are coming there at a rapid rate. Not fewer than forty thousand entered the port of Havana

BATHING HORSES AT ENTRANCE OF HAVANA HARBOUR.

for the year ending October 9, 1,900. An encouraging feature is the fact that they are of a better class than those who formerly drifted to Cuba, whose description by Cervantes so long ago might be aptly applied at any later period, as "profligates, gamblers, sharpers, and women of free manners."

The intermarriage of Cubans with other races affords a singular example of mixed families, it being nothing unusual to find in the same family circle the representatives of the Spanish, French, English, American, and other races. Some of these, it may be, have been educated in Europe, and have thus acquired European sympathies; others have received their

education in the United States, and have decidedly American views; while still others of this cosmopolitan household have remained at home, and are imbued with the peculiar ideas of West Indian life.

In regard to the personal appearance and manner of these Cubans, we are bold enough to sum them up in a few words. The most expressive feature of the women, and alone sufficient to redeem any other fault in their looks, is their eyes, dark and flashing, languid and expressive, large, and in perfect harmony with their black hair and richly tinted skin. Their figure is rather below the average height of the sex in other countries, but what may be lacking in this respect is more than offset by the delicate fullness of the figure and the magnificent carriage. What is of

LOADING CANE CARS.

equal importance is the play of the features, the vivacious expression, and the gentle modulation of the voice, that unite to lend both charm and dignity to every phase and movement of the countenance. Although sometimes accused of wanting in depth of affection, the Cuban woman certainly does not betray this in her looks or deportment. Rather, loving to the point of cruelty, she is the embodiment of womanly grace, and of womanly disdain.

The men are not bad looking, though slighter of stature than the men of the northern countries. They are light and graceful of motion, but their indolent lives have robbed them of those manly qualities we look for in men, to offset the gentler graces of their sisters. The Cuban

has not been educated to do anything that comes along, but rather to avoid doing all that he can. Thus failing in whatever he may begin with, he fails in all else. The rebuilding of a shattered fortune is something he does not dream of. Born and bred in a land where everything conduces to leisure and early maturity, where the girls are women before their northern sisters have entered maidenhood, it is natural that the romantic passions, and a certain kind of chivalry, which borders on the tragical, should become early the ruling stars of their lives.

ROYAL PALMS, YUMURI VALLEY.

A prominent trait of their character is illustrated by the favour shown the lottery in years past. Everywhere one went one was confronted by the seller of lottery tickets. The people knew the government was bankrupt, they knew also that the same set of men who had helped ruin it were running these "mills of chance," with an equal propensity to defraud, as in the other case; but with that blind superstition which, on the part of certain people, clings to everything they cannot see clearly, they bought these tickets in the vain hope that at some time they would hit upon the lucky number which should bring them the prize held up so temptingly to lead them astray. Of course, the managers were shrewd enough to permit the drawing of such prizes as should continue to bait the deluded buyers. So, all over the island, the lottery holders grew richer and richer, year by year, while their patrons grew correspondingly poorer and poorer. Many a time has the last *real*, needed to buy food with, been

paid for a worthless ticket, and many a life has been lived in the vain pursuit of this will-o'-the-wisp.

The favourite pastime of the Cubans, men and women, has been the bull-fight, the most cruel of all sports ever enacted, with neither suggestion of grace nor touch of refinement.

From what has been said, it must be evident that what the people of Cuba need most is education, — education along the line of American progress. Three out of four of Cuba's inhabitants cannot read or write. For this reason, above all others, it is fortunate that the island has passed, if but temporarily, into the control of the United States government. Already a rapid advance has been made in this respect. More than three thousand schools have been established, taught by nearly four thousand teachers, and attended by over two hundred thousand pupils, and a constant increase is being made on every hand. Not less than $4,000,000 will be expended during the present school year, besides a large sum paid for school fixtures, furniture, and buildings.

Under these conditions, and with these prospects ahead, Cuba begins the twentieth century with most high expectations, — expectations, it is reasonable to anticipate, which will be realised in the due course of human progress. Along with this stride in improvement and education, comes a natural desire to move faster than she is fitted to do. Though her inhabitants deserve the freedom that belongs to those who are capable of appreciating it, still, reared as they have been, it is not only best but imperative that they should remain pupils awhile longer before they try to become teachers — leaders. So, until that proud day shall come when she can throw off the effects of four hundred years of enervating lassitude and superstitious ignorance, enough to express confidence in others, and obtain the ability to afford security and protection to herself, must Cuba rightfully remain, as she has done so long, but with the prospect of a certain release eventually, the Land of Promise.

THE OLD SEA WALL, SAN JUAN.

THE FAR EAST.

PORTO RICO.

CHAPTER I.

THE GATEWAY OF WEALTH.

HO! for Porto Rico, the outer and easternmost post of the gateway to the Caribbean Sea. The name is of Spanish origin, and means in that language "The Gateway of Wealth." Whatever their shortcomings may have been (and what race is free from them?), the poetical sons of Iberia showed remarkable felicity in naming "their pearls strung on the sunny seas." If they proved anything but "pearls of peace" to them, their names lost none of their eternal fitness, nor one whit of their smiling nature. The sunny sea its cradle, rocked by the

alternating winds of the southland, and teeming with the fruits of the tropics, our destination long since became a veritable Island Garden.

If Cuba presents a close resemblance to a huge horn laid on the sea, with its large end on the south, and its point piercing the Gulf of Mexico, Porto Rico, with nicer precision, forms on the map of the West Indies an almost perfect parallelogram, with a length nearly three times as great as its width. The sea-line on both sides and on the west end is nearly straight, and, unlike that of Cuba, is almost free from the keys and deep indentations fringing the other island. To add to the protection or defence of this big inland sea from the inhabitants of the Atlantic, a thickly set cordon of islands stretches away to the south, in the form of the bow of a mighty Neptune strung in readiness for the first venturesome spirit approaching this sunny retreat. If we have found that the great horn on the northwest has escaped the ravages of the worms of the deep, so has the string of this matchless bow kept its tension unharmed of the moths.

To those who believe that a submerged continent, sunken at a remote period by some great convulsion of nature, lies engulfed in mid-Atlantic, this outpost, Porto Rico, with its chain of isles known as the Lesser Antilles, possesses uncommon interest. Certain it is, though rising to less altitude than other islands of the Greater Antilles, Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Jamaica, it is the eastern extension of a remarkable submerged mountain slope, which has a descent on the northern side of thirty thousand feet to the bottom of the Bronson Deep, until recently credited with being the lowest surface of land under the sea. Porto Rico has a coast-line of nearly 360 miles, with a length of one hundred miles, a width of thirty-six miles, making an area of 3,668 square miles, or a surface about one-half as large as the State of Massachusetts.

One of the most interesting passages to Porto Rico is through Mona Passage to the port of Ponce, on the southern shore, about one-third of the distance going toward the west. The voyager on this trip gets a hazy view of the island giving its name to the channel, and lying about midway between Hayti on the starboard and Porto Rico on the port. The vision is clear enough to discover a low, flat island of volcanic origin, covered on its flattened summit with scrub bushes, with shores so steep as to defy a landing. On the northwest, forming its outer wedge, it splits the sea with

Hawaiian Flowers

1. *Kakalaioa*
2. *Ohia-lehua*
3. *Hau*
4. *Kohio-ula*

1
2
3
4

a point of rock, which, from a certain position, resembles the sail of a ship unfurled, as if the little island were about to glide away. While we watch this with interest, it suddenly loses shape, but our disappointment is quickly forgotten at the sight of an enormous boulder planted high and dry on the rock-girt bit of earth in such a delicate position that it seems ready to topple over into the sea. It does not seem possible that it has rested there since the creation, and we see at once the appropriateness of

PORTO RICO LANDSCAPE.

its name, *Caigo o no Caigo Point*, "I fall or I do not fall!" Mona Island is noted mainly for its wild hogs and goats, with an abundance of turtles at a certain season in the year.

Now we move past Santa Isabella Bay, called by the fishermen Uvero Bay, where no vessel finds anchor with any safety, on account of the sandy, rocky bottom, and where the skipper, if he is an old salt who has sailed these waters before, keeps a sharp lookout for a hurricane. On we are borne, past El Sardinone, whose white floor and frowning rocks make

one shiver if one is at all sensitive to such suggestions of danger, though it is called safe anchorage when the wind is in the south; on past the little isle of Monito, barren and inhabited only by numerous sea-birds, that sometimes rise in such numbers as to darken the sun. Thirty-six miles away we catch a glimmer of the wooded summit of Desecheo.

Mona Passage is an old water-way from the ports on the coast of America to the Spanish Main, and by those from Europe to Jamaica, especially in winter, and as we thread the passage the wild stories of the ocean banditti come vividly into our mind, and above the others that of one known as St. Grace, whose character was anything but what his name might be supposed to indicate. At one time attacking an English merchant-ship, he unexpectedly found his match, and his assault was resisted so stubbornly, when he had thrown his grapplings and boarded his prey, that not a man was left to cast the grapplings and to man either one ship or the other. Thus locked together, the vessels, with their ghastly burdens, drifted southward. From a message found in a keg tossed overboard, it was proved that one man, the last of the pirates, had not been killed, but was so disabled that he was powerless to help himself, and in his own blood had traced a few words to tell of the fate of the two crews. Then, with the lifeless seamen on the decks, but with no one at the look-outs, not a hand at the wheels, not a skipper to command, the two vessels, manned by the dead and the sport of the fickle winds, sailed on and on. Eventually a hurricane, common in these waters, became the captain of the ships of the dead, and the rivals, still bound together, went ashore on one of the isles of the Lesser Antilles. Though the one has really no connection with the other, we are awakened from our semi-tropical dream by the sound of a voice not devoid of musical gifts, singing in a mellow strain the song of "The Last Buccaneer," written by the eloquent Kingsley, and, wondering where this waif of the sea picked it up, we jot down the beautiful lines:

"THE LAY OF THE LAST BUCCANEER.

"There were forty crafts in Aves that were both swift and stout,
All furnished well with small arms and cannon all about;
And a thousand men in Aves made laws so fair and free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally.

"Then we sailed against the Spaniard with his hoards of plate and gold,
Which he wrung with cruel tortures from Indian folks of old;
Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard as stone,
Who flog men and keelhaul them and starve them to the bone.

"Oh! palms grew high in Aves, and fruits that shone like gold,
And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous to behold,
And the negro maids to Aves from bondage fast did flee
To welcome gallant sailors a-sweeping in from sea.

RAILWAY STATION AT YAUCO.

"Oh! sweet it was in Aves to hear the landward breeze
A swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you while you listened to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside which never touch the shore.

"But Scripture saith an ending to all fine things must be,
So the king's ships sailed on Aves, and quite put down were we.
All day we fought like bull-dogs, but they burnt the booms at night,
And I fled in a piragua sore wounded from the fight.

"Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass beside,
Till for all I tried to cheer her the poor young thing she died.
But as I lay a-gasping a British sail came by,
And brought me home to England, here to beg and die.

"And now I'm old and going: I'm sure I can't tell where.
One comfort is, this world's so hard I can't be worse off there.
If I might be but a sea-dove, I'd fly across the main
To the pleasant isle of Aves to look at it once again."

GENERAL VIEW OF MAYAGUEZ.

Scarcely has the romantic singer ended his imaginative tale of the Isle of Birds, low down on the American coast, which may, indeed, have been a favourite resort for the sea rovers, when our sight and attention are arrested by the appearance of a lofty mountain range, called Luqillo, and running through the island which is our destination. A peak stands out boldly at the eastern end, with a height of nearly four thousand feet, known as El Yunque, which means "The Anvil." This is the highest point of land on Porto Rico. The entire island is practically an elevated, elongated sierra made up mainly of volcanic rock, presenting to the gaze of the seafarer an appearance which its discoverer happily described as a huge wrinkled handkerchief laid on the earth. Seen from the sea, there are few regular altitudes, and no clearly defined crest line, as nearly all other islands show. The nearest approach to this, and this becomes more sharply outlined on closer

view, is a ridge beginning about midway on the western end, at a port called Mayaguez, and running to the east coast at Humacao, at a comparatively regular distance from the southern shore. Another range, beginning near the geographical centre of the island, bifurcates, and, extending to the very point of Cape Juan on the north shore, helps to form a stupendous, if somewhat irregular, letter Y on the landscape. Other ranges, ridges, or spurs shoot off in opposite directions, until creating a billow of crests without any regular division of country, but when viewed from the highest point, they present the appearance of a confused collection of conical peaks and corrugated ridges. El Yunque, already mentioned as the highest elevation, belongs to one of these shorter ranges on the northern portion. Between these billows and swells are the many fertile valleys and bottom lands, watered each by some silvery stream, while at their base, toward the sea, lie the playa plains, looking less inviting to the gaze, but a necessary part of the grand whole.

The loud praises of the Island Garden which have been sung in our ears are, perhaps, exaggerated; at any rate, the first panorama unfolded to our gaze is anything but satisfactory. We had expected to behold a fertile and promising landscape; instead we see an uneven landscape, looking decidedly brown, and far from meeting our expectations. We are told that this is the general impression at whatever point we may approach the island. Then we recall that this was somewhat the case upon approaching Kauai, the Garden Isle of Hawaii, though there was greater promise in the luxuriant vegetation. But we abide our time patiently. The shore here is commonly marked by long, narrow tracts of level country, called "playa plains." On the south coast, these show the effect of a lack of moisture, but on the north, as in Hawaii, the verdure is greener and fresher from more frequent rains. By this it must not be understood that Porto Rico does not have its two seasons, wet and dry, as all tropical countries do, but on the northern slopes especial favour seems to be shown. Though Porto Rico is situated in the torrid zone, its climate is more agreeable than that of Cuba, or of many places situated even farther north. This is due to the land breezes that prevail both from the north and the south. The mean temperature at San Juan, its capital, situated on the northern shore, ranges from 75° in January to 82° in August. The highest temperature on record is 99°, and the minimum 57°, showing a very

slight change from one extreme to the other. This is coast temperature, or that near the shore. This gradually lowers as the ascent of the highlands is made, until at an altitude of three thousand feet, the mean annual temperature is 72° F. The average rainfall at San Juan is sixty inches, or about the same as that for New Orleans. Nearly two-thirds of this falls in the short period denominated summer. This rainfall increases eastward from the capital to one hundred inches. On the southern slope this drops to less than one-half, and in sections, irrigation is necessary in order to raise a crop.

AGUADILLA.

While we are learning this, we find ourselves already being taken rapidly toward our first landing on the island, the picturesque town of Aguadilla, the capital of what we should call a province or state. Our geography tells us that Porto Rico is divided into seven political divisions or states, which correspond very nearly to the provinces of Cuba. Beginning in this northwest corner, these are known as Aguadilla, with a population of 99,645; Arecibo, population 162,308; Bayamon, population 147,681; Humacao, population 100,866; Guayama, population 111,986; Ponce, population 203,191; Mayaguez, population 127,566. The entire

population of the island will be seen to reach 953,243, or well up toward one million inhabitants.[1] The government of Porto Rico has also control over the neighbouring islands of Isla Mona, lying in Mona Pass on the west, and Culebra and Vieques, with some smaller isles on the east.

Each of these departments has a capital by the same name as the state, while in Bayamon is situated the capital of the entire island. Besides this division, each department is subdivided into municipal districts, which number in all sixty-nine. These are, in turn, divided into *barrios* or wards.

But our interest centres now in the ancient town, at the head of the

VIEW OF SAN JUAN FROM DECK OF VESSEL IN HARBOUR.

noble bay, where, in November, 1493, "the great navigator," who led the way in the discovery of all these islands of the West Indies, as well as of America, anchored his ships on his second voyage of exploration. The little town of Aguada, farther up the coast, has the honour of being the older place by a trifle, and the first landing spot of Columbus. This was on the nineteenth of November, and on the sixteenth he had sighted the first land since leaving Santo Domingo, Cape Mala Pascua. He immediately took possession of the island in the name of his king, and named

[1] Census of 1899. The growth of the island in population is shown by the following figures from other censuses: in 1765, the entire population, as near as could be calculated, was 44,883; in 1800, it was 155,426; 1860, 583,308; in 1887, it had increased to 798,565.

it San Juan Bautista, in memory of St. John the Baptist. The town has now about twenty-five hundred inhabitants, and is the head of a jurisdiction of ten thousand.

Continuing his explorations, he made into this harbour, and from the palm-shaded springs gushing out from the hillsides back of Aguadilla, he obtained water sufficient to supply his little fleet, when he sailed away, after having bestowed upon the place the name it now bears. The island at that time was known to the native population as Borinquen.

FISHERMEN'S HUTS ON BEACH NEAR ARROYO.

Columbus never returned to the island, but, fifteen years later, trading vessels, stopping here to water, told such stories of its wonderful country, and the amount of gold that seemed to exist in its mountains and streams, that Nicolas de Ovando, governor of Santo Domingo, sent that picturesque navigator and explorer, who had been the companion of Columbus on his second voyage, Juan Ponce de Leon, to ascertain if these wild reports were true. De Leon was received with open arms by the principal cacique, Agueynaba, and was shown over that part of the island. Pleased with

the prospect, the former resolved to conquer it, but first to obtain a title over it as governor. With this end in view, he returned to Santo Domingo, to find that Diego Columbus had become governor of that island, and that one Cristoval de Sotomayor had been appointed by the king governor of the territory he coveted.

CHAPTER II.

THE NATIVE RACE.

DIEGO COLUMBUS, however, would neither affirm the appointment of De Sotomayor nor appoint De Leon. Instead he sent Juan Ceron as governor. With that romantic spirit of his, Ponce de Leon went back to Porto Rico as a humble attendant of this expedition. He found the men he had left on the island had been well treated by the natives, and he entered upon the proposed exploration of the country with all the enthusiasm of the younger leader of the party, though his head was already touched with time's frost, and his shoulders were bent under the burdens of an active life.

Meanwhile Ovando, his faithful friend, had reached Seville, and he gave the king such a favourable and impressive account of the worth of De Leon, that the latter was appointed governor of Porto Rico in 1509, and Diego Columbus was ordered to withdraw his man. That year the governor founded the town of Caparra, which is now known as Pueblo Viejo, situated about three miles inland from the bay of San Juan. The year following, he abandoned this place for the better situation of the present site of San Juan, and called the place Porto Rico. Later this name was given to the island, and the name bestowed upon the latter by Columbus was transferred to the town.

Receiving the strangers at first with every show of frankness and goodwill, the natives eventually became distrustful of them. Good reason had they for this, as they saw one after another of their numbers seized and compelled to work in the mines like slaves. All this they bore in silent awe, looking upon the Spaniards as immortal, as the latter had claimed to be. But the wily cacique, Agueynaba, came to doubt this part of their story, and seeing that something had got to be done to save his people, he decided upon a bold plan of action. Accordingly, he ordered some of his men to seize the first white man they found alone, and put him to some test that should prove him mortal or not. Soon afterward, one of the

Spaniards was seen crossing a stream, which is still noted for the strange deed that followed, and taking him unawares they caught him and bound him hands and feet. This done they held his head under water for three whole hours. Then, with such feelings as may be imagined, trembling lest he still live, fearful that he might be dead, they lifted him slowly up from that terrible bath. Slowly, watching each feature to catch the first signs of consciousness, that they might drop him and run for life; slowly upward, until the dripping head was out of the water. The haggard features were ghastly, and no pulse of life throbbed in the stiffening form in their clasp. Still unable to believe they were yet safe, they remained by the body, and for three days a constant watch was kept over it. Then it was decided that these strange tyrants were mortal like themselves.

ABORIGINAL INDIAN RELIQUES (PORTO RICO).

A wave of rejoicing went over the island at this news, and, no longer held in awe, the natives rose as one man to exterminate the newcomers. Every Spaniard found outside of their works was killed, including Sotomayor, who had accompanied the expedition. It will be understood that the Spanish fought desperately, and did not succumb until the settlements they had formed had been destroyed.

Among those who did the valiant fighting was Ponce de Leon, whose muscles had been hardened to iron in fierce contests with the Moors, and if his arms had lost the plumpness of youth, and his eye the fire of earlier years, he covered himself with glory, and returned to Santo Domingo. Baffled in one direction, he now turned his attention to that visionary

quest which has so added to the halo of romance that surrounds his life. He had told the simple Caribs of the eastern island that he was immortal, and he had been informed that somewhere in the great and wonderful West there was a fount of water which possessed the remarkable power of restoring to old age the flower and vigour of youth. So thither he went on that memorable voyage, in his long-continued search discovering Florida, which he believed to be an island. The magical fountain for which he sought proving an illusion, he finally went back to Spain somewhat

U. S. ARMY STORES TRANSPORT.

broken in spirit. His glowing account of the land he had discovered caused the King of Spain to appoint him governor of Florida. So in 1521 he set forth on what was to prove his last voyage across the Atlantic. On his way he again visited Porto Rico, which had rallied from the attacks of the natives, and paid his farewell to the island. He landed in Florida near the place of his previous arrival, eight years before. But the Indians had learned something of Spanish character during the time, and they proceeded to deny the whites the privilege of landing. A sharp fight ensued, during which Ponce de Leon was shot by one of their arrows, and,

taken to Cuba by his men, he died there. Thus ends, with tragedy, the eventful life of Porto Rico's first ruler.

If the natives were at first successful against the new race trying to take possession of their home-land, the very shape and physical features of their country were against their holding it. Unlike Cuba, this land offered no swamps or mountains for them to flee to, that they might hold their own with their inferior weapons against the best warriors of the old world. Neither were there any dense forests, even at that date, to shield them, all of which facts have tended to keep Porto Rico clear of those many rebel-

GROUP OF PEASANTS AND NATIVE PONIES.

lions and uprisings, which have so checkered the histories of Spain's other colonies.

It does not appear either that the aborigines were of a warlike nature. Although aroused at first by the spirit of the ancient cacique, Agueynaba, to a blow in retaliation, it is not certain that it was ever repeated. If it had been, the effort must have proved most futile, though it was claimed by Ponce de Leon that the natives numbered nearly a million, as many inhabitants as the island contains now, and they flocked over the country like "bees around a hive." There is no doubt that this was too high an estimate, while others who place the number as low as one hundred thousand may have gone as far toward the opposite extreme. Except as it

concerns the fearful slaughter made by the Spaniards, it does not matter. Spain did not stop to count the number of her victims scattered along her bloody pathway. It was sufficient to know that inside of a few years this numerous people had vanished from their native land, like flies that are killed by a premature frost.

They were described as of copper hue, of darker and sallower skin than the Indians of the mainland of America, and shorter of stature than they, but with well-developed figures. On account of being so shaped by pressure when they were infants, their noses and heads, in front and back, were flat, while they had wide nostrils. Bad teeth was another of their unfavourable features. They had abundance of long, coarse, black hair. Living in a land that afforded them everything they craved in the way of food, all to be had for the plucking from overhanging boughs, or from fishing and hunting, it was natural they should be indolent and incapable of any great effort.

They were extremely simple in their methods of dress. "Men and unmarried women wore no clothing, but painted their bodies abundantly and with much skill, drawing upon them many varieties of figures with the oils, gums, and resins which they extracted from the trees and plants. In this uniform they presented themselves in their military expeditions, public balls, and other assemblies. This simple costume, which was acquired with little labour, and was varied according to individual tastes, was not without its ornaments and trimmings, affording opportunity for the display of skill and inventive powers, not only in the various figures and colours with which each one painted himself or herself, but also in the head-dresses that were made of feathers of exquisite colours. They put small plates of gold on their cheeks, and hung shells, precious stones, and relics from their ears and noses, while an image of their god, *Cemi*, was never forgotten. The chief used, as a distinctive emblem, a large golden plate worn on the breast. Married women wore an apron which descended nearly to the knee, but no clothing was worn on the rest of the body. The wives of the caciques wore their aprons to their ankles, except at the national game of ball, when they also wore short ones."

The marriage ceremony was very simple; an exchange of a few presents, and the placing of the image of their god, Cemi, at the door of the hut of the intended bride; after twenty-four hours she was expected to

SAN JUAN FROM OLD SEA-WALL.

come forth and meet her future master at his door. It was not good form for him to seek her at this stage of the courtship, if such rude conduct deserves such a name, and from that time she was expected to become his unto death. This part was literal, in case she outlived him. If she was so fortunate, or unfortunate, it might be considered by some, as to become one of his favourites, she was expected to be buried alive along with the body of the deceased husband. Although she went unwillingly, she went;

LABOURER'S HUT.

for woman was little better than a slave to the whim and caprice of her liege lord. By this it will be understood that the men were allowed to have more than one wife, and some of the chiefs had as many as a dozen wives, all of whom, it is claimed, lived together in harmony. The women did most of the work in the fields, if not all of it, besides waiting upon their husbands about their homes.

The habitations of these people were extremely plain, consisting of mere huts, built by setting some uprights in the ground, of sufficient height

for a person to stand straight, with a covering made of branches of trees and grass. The walls were made of cane stalks bound by filaments with the bark and leaves of the palm-tree, and brought together at the top; they were made either round, oval, or square, according to the fancy of the builder. A floor of cane or sticks was laid at the foot of the posts, but there were no windows nor chimneys. The floor was usually raised several feet from the ground, and under each was a sort of court or yard, where, at favourable times, the occupants of this rude dwelling were wont to gather.

It is somewhat curious to note that this manner of dwelling has not entirely disappeared from the island, though its originators long since vanished from the scene. The object of raising the floor so far above the earth was to escape the moisture that at intervals would have made living nearer the ground undesirable, if not dangerous to health.

The main articles of furniture for these huts were the hammock and calabash shell, used respectively for repose and for cooking purposes. They had fires, which they ignited at will by taking three sticks, two fastened together at one end, and, after placing the point of the third against the ends of the others, beating them together between the palms of their hands.

These natives armed themselves with the bow and arrow, being very expert archers, and also with a primitive sort of sword, made of tough wood, and set with a stone edge. This weapon was sometimes given the shape of an axe. Like the inhabitants of all other islands of the sea, they hewed out of the trunks of trees huge canoes, some of them capable of holding as many as fifty men. In those days Porto Rico had great forests of fine growth, such as were not excelled by any of the tropical lands.

The religion of these simple people — living in a most primitive way, often subsisting for long periods on grubs and insects, passing their days in hammocks, or in sitting squat upon their heels on the ground, leaving to the care of women their patches of maize, plantains, and sweet potatoes, and indulging in no more violent exercises than fishing, dancing, or eating — consisted of a superstitious worship of an image carved from wood according to their fancy, and named Cemi. Each village had a sort of temple where this god was supposed to preside, and where his image was

sure to be found. These places were believed to be sacred to the ruling powers, and hither the caciques went to learn from the graven god their duty as rulers. These retinues were accompanied by the *buhitis*, or priests, who took upon themselves the duty of concealment behind one of these gods, and from their coverts uttering the wish of Cemi, as they pretended to understand it. In this manner, each whim or desire of the cacique was proclaimed. If he wished it to rain on the morrow, the voice

ANCIENT INDIAN HIEROGLYPHICS.

supposed by the simple listeners to issue from Cemi said rain; if war was desired, war was declared; in the same way peace was proclaimed; an offensive person was sentenced by this same arbitrary voice; the seasons were regulated, and even the rising and the setting of the sun, and the changes of the moon were all arranged! In case any prediction failed to come true, it was said that the god, for good and sufficient reasons of his own, had changed his mind. So he was not blamed, and no ground for doubt was left for even the most skeptical.

Images of Cemi were kept everywhere conveniently at hand, and each dwelling had its dark corner where the god reigned supreme. The religious ceremonies of the people consisted in acts of extreme humiliation to themselves, and in offering food to their god, all of which was greedily devoured by the priests. They believed in two invisible beings that ruled their lives. One of these was naturally kind and benevolent, giving them the best of life unasked; the other was his reverse, and him they had to beseech frequently for deliverance from harm, and the various ills that befall even primitive man. They believed, if they lived good lives on earth, they would enter at death into a land of beauty and endless delights, a land covered with noble forests, abounding with game of all kinds, and watered with many streams filled with fish, where perpetual spring would reign, and whither they would enter to join their wives and relatives, who had preceded them to enjoy for ever this happy life.

CEMETERY, UTUADO.

If it appears at first that the priests had an easy time of it, closer investigation shows that theirs was no bed of down. In case of the sickness of one of his flock, the priest was compelled to attend him, and was expected to cure him. His first requisite was to purge himself, and to adopt the same diet and treatment as his patient in which he was closely watched by the relatives and wives of the sick man. Even then, if the stricken one died, the buhiti was often seized, his eyes put out, or some equally dreadful punishment inflicted. As soon as it was apparent that the sick man was going to die, he was suffocated by his friends, even if he were a great chief, and his body was opened, dried by a fire, and finally buried in some cave - cemetery. Not only were his weapons laid beside him, and a good amount of provisions to enable him to make his long journey, but his best beloved wives were buried alive with him. These were

covered with brush and sticks to a considerable depth, on the top of which was thrown a quantity of earth.

The chief pastimes were dancing and playing ball. Of the dance there were several kinds; the marriage dance, the death dance, the war dance, — in fact, a dance for every event of importance, each of which was made to symbolise the occasion it was supposed to honour. The war dance was naturally the most enthusiastic and effective, and so aptly were the scenes of conflict sometimes imitated that it seemed as though the real contest were being enacted over again. In some of these dances only men engaged, in others women alone, and in still others men and women danced together. These were followed to the wild music played upon drums made out of the hollow trunks of trees and the dried fruit of the calabash-tree. These drums were of various sizes, and have survived their inventors so far as to become the national musical instruments of the island in the hands of the descendants of their conquerors. Thus calabash shells, indented at the ends and played upon by sticks, became the accompaniment to the piano and other modern instruments at the society ball, while it was adopted by the Spanish military bands in their play at the country dances.

The Borinquens did not possess great faculty for mirth, and their songs were always of a serious nature, filled with historical pictures. In this way they retained the traditions of their ancestors for many generations, so that these songsters became the historians of the island, recounting in measured chants the genealogy of their chiefs, their deeds of prowess, the dates of their deaths, the beauty of their wives, and the more important events of their reigns.

Besides the *areito*, or dance, and next in importance, they had a ball game, for which certain grounds were set apart at each village. Women as well as men took part in this, the excitement often running high, and on days when these games took place, large crowds of spectators, some coming from a long distance, would gather about the place. Sometimes these games were played between players from different villages, when the scene would become filled with wild interest.

As a rule, this race was peaceful, and not many wars seemed to have taken place. The majority yielded without question to the rule of the caciques, who were always old men. The greatest crime in their belief was stealing, and for this offence the victim was impaled alive and

doomed to die. It may be inferred that thefts were not common. In fact, few crimes were committed, and on the whole the race was on about the same level as the aborigines of other tropical islands.

So rapidly did this people decline under the harsh treatment of the Spanish, as the result of their battles with the invaders, diseases that came to them as one of the "gifts" of civilisation, labour to which they were unfit through generations of indolence, and other causes growing out of these, that in 1543, about thirty years after the settlement at San Juan, only sixty natives out of a population of half a million were reported to be found on the island! Surely this is a record of annihilation hard to excel.

A COUNTRY VILLAGE.

The recent census takers were unable to find any trace existing at the present time of this unfortunate race, but in a report made in August, 1899, Captain W. S. Schuyler says: "While work was being done on the roads, I had occasion to watch crowds of seven or eight hundred men gathered about the pay tables at Las Marias, La Vega, and Añasco. The frequency of the aboriginal type was very noticeable. While it is almost certain that there is to-day no single individual in Porto Rico of pure aboriginal stock, it is equally sure that the type can be seen everywhere."

Among the curious beliefs existing among the people of to-day is one which accounts for the difference in colour of the races, and which is to the effect that the Creator made three men, all of an intensely dark colour. In their wanderings over the new country, this trio found themselves on the bank of a singularly clear stream. Invited by its pure waters to take a bath, one of the three plunged in. Though he did not remain long in the water, when he came out his skin was white. One of his companions, seeing this, jumped in, that he might be made the hue of the other. But the colouring matter that came off the first had so darkened the water

that he was simply made brown. The third, more indifferent to this change of colour, declared that he was going to lie down and take a nap, and let the stream run itself clear. But when he awoke he was surprised to find that the sun had dried up the stream so only little pools of water remained at places. Seeing now the mistake he had committed, but anxious to make what he could out of his situation, he dropped upon his hands and feet in the water. This accounts for the lighter shade of the palms of the negro's hands and the soles of his feet.

CHAPTER III.

THE WESTERN SLOPE.

LEAVING the rest of Porto Rico's history to be told later on, we will resume our description of ancient Aguadilla sitting at the head of an open roadstead within touch of the breaking surf, with the mouth of the Culebrinas River on one side and Cape Borinquen on the other, and a background of steep mountains that seem ready to slip down into the sea, carrying the little town with it. Down the hillside rushes the sparkling stream that delighted the hearts of the Spaniards, one feature the years have not taken from the picturesque scene. This selfsame stream, however, has been so far caught and tamed that its liquid silver wells up through the Plaza de la Fuenta, a veritable fountain of health whence strangers from many countries and at many dates have drank and have blessed it in their hearts if not with their lips. Midway on the ascent of this coral-formed mountain, near the source of this series of cascades, is seen an antique church, with twin steeples, one of which has a bell, and its mate a clock. This is a beautiful and picturesque setting for the fountain of crystalline water, and for once it would seem as though the work of man had given an added charm to the handicraft of nature. The top of this mountain, called the Jaicoa, is crested with groves of orange, lemon, and palm trees, while over the tops of these we catch a shadowy suggestion of a still higher range of mountains farther inland.

Among the noticeable buildings of this Spanish town is the three-storied town hall, built a little over fifty years ago of rubble-stone masonry, and still in fairly good repair. The basement is used for a jail, while the second floor is occupied by the municipal officers, and the third by the police force. There is also a custom-house of masonry, and at the farther end of the town, a conspicuous object to the incoming vessel, a fort. Aguadilla has a population of 6,425, according to the census of 1899, upon which all of our calculations are based. The city is the terminal of the one tramway granted under Spanish rule, which connects it with Mayaguez,

seventeen miles distant. This piece of road, single track, and in good running condition, its engines fed by American coal, is really a link in the long chain of railroad planned in 1878 to belt the island, beginning at San Juan, and after touching all of the important towns, most of which are situated near or on the coast, to end where it began. Something like one-half the entire distance around the island has already been built, and much more is well under way. The need of this improvement was apparent to the most casual observer, which is illustrated by the fact that Ponce and Mayaguez, the principal towns next to the capital, were not connected with each other by a really passable highway. All of the traffic was carried on by coast vessels.

QUADROON TYPE AT PONCE.

Mayaguez, like nearly all Porto Rican cities, is a little distance from the port at the foot of the hill, while the town stands at the summit a mile away. This is a beautiful city, with excellent climate, and the third in size and importance of those on the island. It is a little over one hundred miles from San Juan, and has a population of over fifteen thousand. It was founded in 1760; was given the name of villa in 1836; was made a city in 1877.

Facing Mona Passage, and connected not only with Aguadilla by rail, but with the inland town of Lares in the same way, Mayaguez is a place of importance and of many attractions. It has some fine buildings, the best of these, according to Spanish custom, surrounding the plaza, a beautiful square, ornamented in the centre with a magnificent bronze figure of Columbus poised upon a bronze world, supported by heads of

wild animals carved from stone and showing both grace and dignity, while he held aloft for many years the flag of Spain. This stands on an ornate and imposing base. On one side of the plaza is a fine church, and nearly opposite, the municipal buildings. The city has also civil and military hospitals, two asylums, a public library, a theatre, and a handsome market constructed of iron.

A shallow river divides the town, tradition saying that once much gold was taken from its sands. This stream is spanned by two iron bridges, called the Marina and Guenar. The first is one hundred feet long and twenty-four feet wide. It was built at a cost of twelve thousand *pesos*.

CUSTOM-HOUSE AT MAYAGUEZ.

Besides the square mentioned are two others adorned by pretty fountains. On the east and south, the city is bounded by the Hormigueros mountains, and on the north by those of Añasco, the space between these and the sea that is not occupied by the city itself being a tract of fertile *vega* or plain where fruit groves abound, bearing all kinds of fruits.

Upon being told that no tourist considers his trip complete until he has visited the famous sanctuary of Montserrat, situated seven miles away across the country, we tarry until another day, that we may not miss the sight of which we have heard so much, and to which it is said that thousands of pilgrims made their way in a single year during a period when holy thoughts occupied the minds of men more than they do to-day.

Mayaguez claims the honour, which she has to share with three other claimants, of being nearest to the spot where Columbus first landed and returned thanks to God for having guided his footsteps hither. Having been a wanderer and something of an outcast, it may not disturb the spirit of this great navigator to be thus claimed on every hand, until it is safe to say that no man in the world was ever so claimed and denied as he, both in deeds and in body. Mayaguez shows greater signs of prosperity than are to be seen generally in Spanish towns, while outside one misses the border of huts and hovels that usually mark these towns of Spain's colonies. It is the centre of considerable business, and employs many

STREET SCENE IN MAYAGUEZ, WESTERN COAST.

hands in the work of handling and running the four large coffee-mills which prepare the sun-dried berries brought in from the adjacent country for the foreign market. It has also a tannery which turns out an excellent quality of leather for the island cobblers. Among other industries of the town are manufacturing straw hats, making baskets, and producing a chocolate which finds favour in the Spanish markets. It has the best ice-plant on the island, turning off about ten tons of ice a day. It has a fine supply of water, which any northern city might envy, brought from the hills two miles away. It has a street railway, which is a source of local pride, and something the stranger himself cannot despise, though it is a narrow-gauge track, and the cars are small. There is, too, an electric light plant that is

a credit to the city. So, with its broad streets, its wide bridges, its well-kept squares, its fine monuments, its noble groves of fruits, of which large shipments are made to the United States, its modern enterprises and its modern buildings, Mayaguez does not compare unfavourably with its sister cities in a temperate zone.

But there is one drawback to all this, and Mayaguez is not as badly off as many of the other towns on the islands. With a few exceptions, which

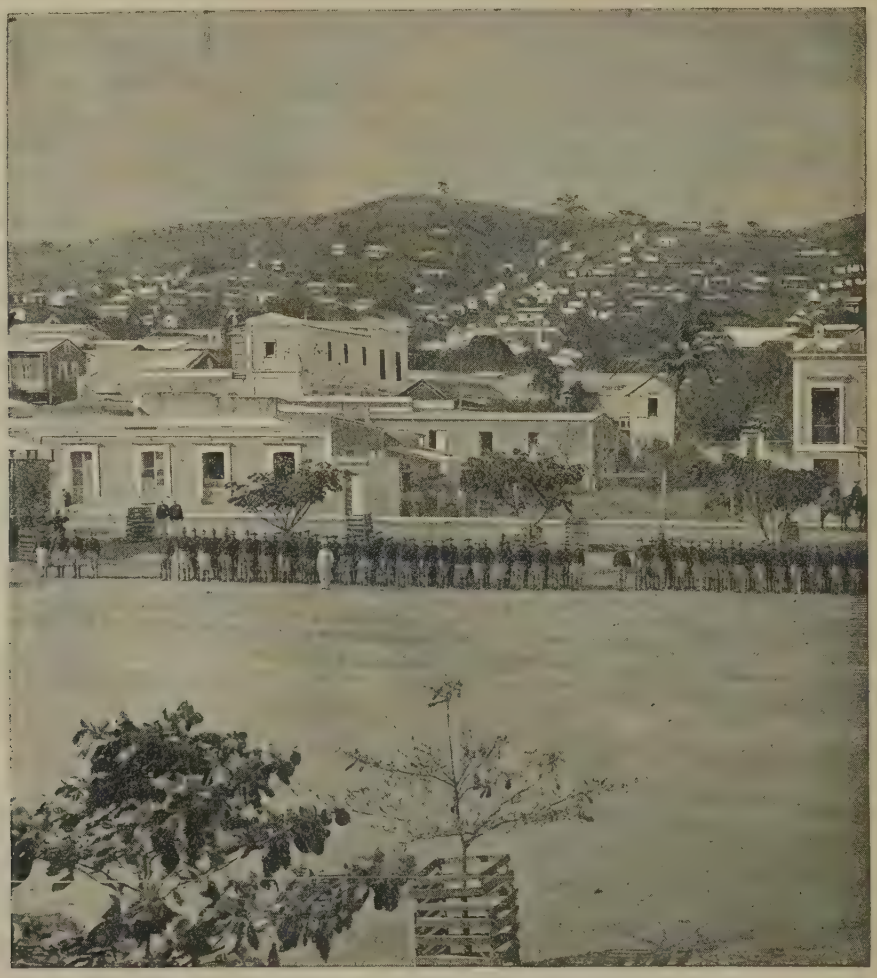
TRAVEL THROUGH JUNGLE GROWTH.

we shall soon describe, Porto Rico has been sadly lacking in ways of communication between its towns, particularly if situated inland. We say "has been" advisedly, for the American government, under the management of General Davis, is already doing much in this direction, and promises to do still more. Already over a million of dollars have been expended in this work, and if for no other reason, the Porto Ricans will have good cause to bless American government in making, what they have needed so long under Spanish rule, communication easy between different localities.

We are prepared to meet some of the difficulties on our journey over the hills and through the valleys by a "trail," properly called, where in the rainy season it would be impossible to pass with a team, and hazardous to thread on foot. But in this case our passage is made easier than we had expected. This is a path trodden by many feet, which alone have made it smooth, though heavy rains have done much to destroy this. Our course now winds over the foot-hills, or along their sides, where only the most sure-footed quadruped could find its way. If at first we shudder at this, we gradually become used to it, and feeling we can follow where our guide leads we command ourselves enough to watch the shifting scenes around us. We begin to see that, as we understand the term, Porto Rico is without a forest. It is true that on the higher portion of El Yunque, in the Sierra Luquillo, there is a patch of virgin forest eight square miles in extent, and everywhere the island is dotted with clumps of trees, many of them large and beautiful; as a whole, however, Porto Rico is practically deforested. But unlike the open fields of the United States, where we see, it may be, large tracts of country without a tree, here almost everywhere there are individual trees scattered over the landscape, except in the sugar and tobacco plantations. We see them along the trails, by the roadside, in the corners of lots, reminders of the aboriginal growth, — lemon-trees, orange-trees, mangoes, *aguacates*, *mameys*, bread-fruits, and other magnificent monarchs; and, besides these of a large size, the *nisperos*, *flamboyantes*, *guanabonas*, each giving an added depth to the tropical green of the foliage.

Another class of plants claims our attention, numbering among them some of the most prominent dye-woods in the world. Foremost among these is the brazil-wood, the more valuable for its rarity; another, a small tree which flings its long, curved pods, of a reddish hue, in our faces. It is the *divi-divi*, from which is extracted a reddish-brown dye. The indigo shrub is another that threatens to stop our progress with its boldness in reaching out into our pathway. From the leaves and berries of this is obtained that article indispensable to the washerwoman, bluing. Still another, is a shapely plant that we see almost everywhere, crowned with ornate red and yellow pods, looking like rolls of fur at a distance. This is the *achota*, better known by the name of *annotta*, given to the dye made from it, and used as a colouring for butter and cheese.

Numerous flowering plants, whose brilliant blossoms find a setting worthy of them in the dazzling foliage of this clime, constantly meet our gaze, some of which send forth a perfume which fills the air for a wide circuit. Not all of this is pleasant to the sensitive nostrils. There are



AMERICAN TROOPS ON PARADE IN THE PLAZA OF YAUCO.

also shrubs and trees which exhale from their bark and leaves perfumes that linger with us long after they have been passed and forgotten.

In the midst of this slow advance, we come in sight of the lonely sanctuary on the mountain-top, and built of masonry. We are told that this sacred edifice, commanding a wide view of the surrounding country, was built by a pious follower of the cross as a sort of penance for having unwittingly caused the untimely death of his lady-love. No one seemed to know the real circumstances connected with the romantic affair, and we

are inclined to accept it in the same childlike innocence of belief that we listen to many others of the legends and traditions that cling about the place, giving it an added charm and grace. In years past, it has been a favourite pilgrimage for newly-wedded couples, and over this hilly, broken route, we are told, many wedding trains have wound their way.

The simple tale which lingers longest in our memory, is that narrated by the poorly clad and humble occupant of this holy place, as he sat in a most impious manner, with his feet elevated in that American-like attitude, higher than his head, and with his lips sucking a pipe that looked extremely black, and, to put it plainly, had a smell decidedly rank. For a person of his calling, he possessed a frankness that was almost startling.

"So you come from America? I understand America is a very wicked country, but very smart. Perhaps you are smarter than we are, but I have yet to learn that you have solved the one question which has puzzled all mankind for these many years. Tell me, do they do much thinking there?" Upon our replying that they (the people) do, he went on to say that he did not concern himself about a matter of which no good could come.

"Had the great mystery been for us to know, it is certain we should have been told. We are in the midst of a life which has a real as well as an unreal side. The real we live, why should we bother about that regarding which we do not know that we shall ever know?" Meeting with no response, except an inquiring look, he continued, between the rising smoke-clouds of his pipe:

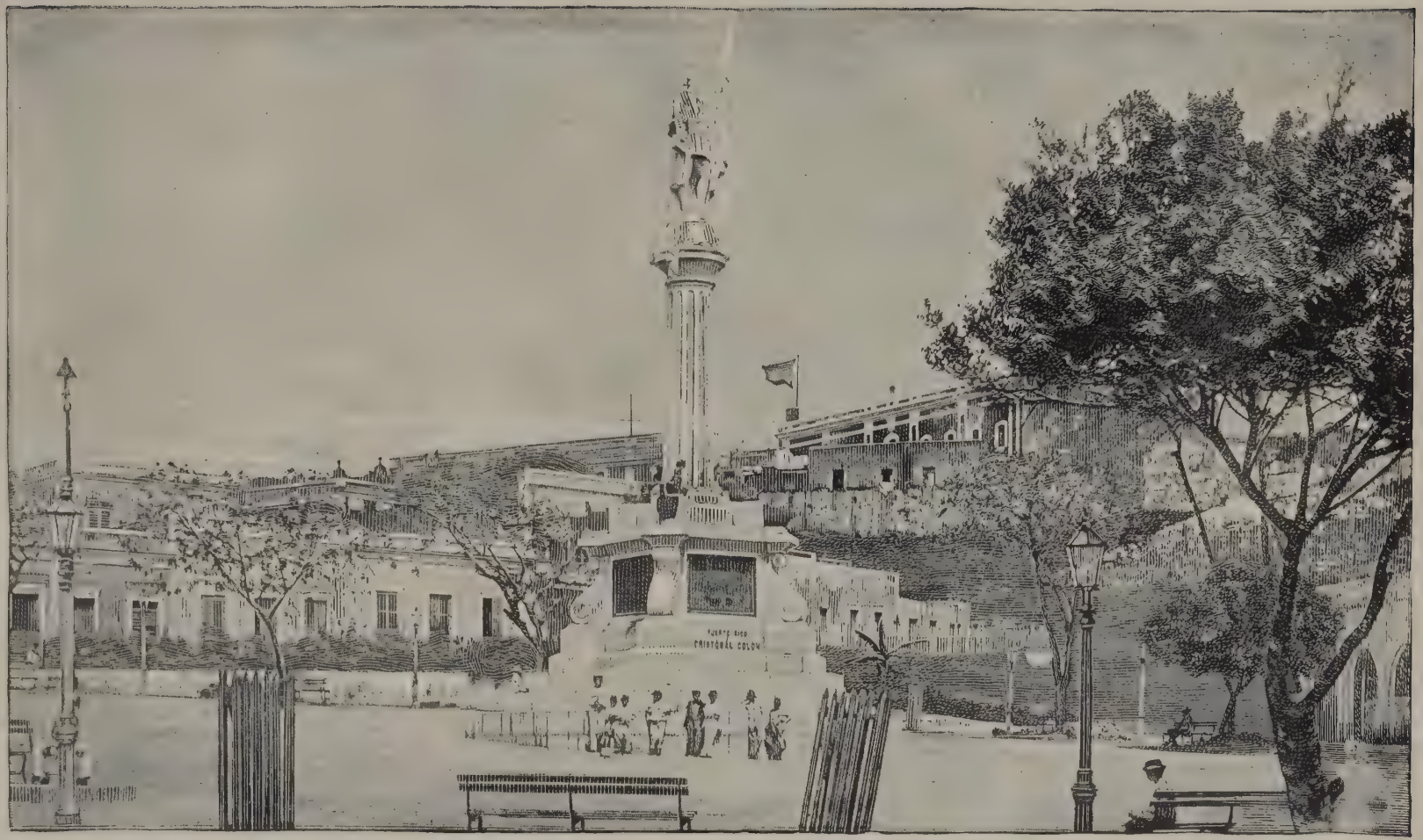
"This curious mind of man must have been acquired of the ass, the first creature created by Jupiter at the beginning of the world, and we gain about as much as the ass did for his inquiries. Looking stupidly about him, as he stood blinking and wondering in his strange surroundings, he began to ask himself what it all meant. Why had he been made an ass, where had he come from, why had he come alone, and whither was he going? After pondering upon this for awhile, and unable to solve the riddle himself, he went to his creator and demanded the reason for this mystery. Jupiter, busy at the moment, was vexed by this question, and he replied, curtly: 'Your mission is simple enough. You are to bear the burdens of another animal. Your fare is to be straw and thistles, and you are to be beaten and driven by this other animal, who will walk upon two

legs, and possess all of the vices and none of the virtues of the other animals.' Hearing this, the poor ass was frightened, and he declared that he wished he had never been made. He had not asked this; in fact, he did not remember that he had had anything to do about it. He did not know that he had harmed any living creature. How long, therefore, must he be this drudge to an animal he had never seen? 'Thirty years,' replied Jupiter, when the poor ass fell on his knees and begged that the time

RIVER CASCADE.

might not be as long. Seeing the suffering he had thoughtlessly given one of his creatures, his very first, and thinking, perhaps, that he had started in rather harshly, Jupiter answered that if the ass would be a patient and faithful servant to his master he would make his life shorter by twenty years. This so pleased the ass that he went his way rejoicing.

"The second of the created animals, the dog, soon came to be in the same inquisitive frame of mind that the ass had shown, and he, too, went to his maker for a solution of the mystery of his unsought life. Still busy



THE PLAZA, SAN JUAN, AND THE COLUMBUS MONUMENT.

at his tasks, and more vexed than ever at this interruption, he replied, testily: 'You are to be the slave of an animal I am yet to create. You shall come and go at his command, cringe at his feet, fly on his errands, fetch him his food, but eat the bones he leaves of his meat, and rest at night with a chain around your neck, keeping awake to watch over your master.' Frightened at this prospect, the dog begged to know how long such a life must last, and, on being told that thirty years was the allotted period for all creatures, he besought Jupiter to shorten his years. This

GUAYANILLA.

his creator finally did, cutting it down to ten years, as he had the time of the ass.

"Next in the list was the monkey, and, like his companions, he murmured and wondered, and finally asked Jupiter the reason for his coming, and whither he was going. Angry that he could not be free from the inquisitiveness of his creatures, Jupiter told the monkey that he should live as a caricature of the animal he had in mind to make, that his life should be devoted to mimicking this unborn animal, that he should be led by a string, and grimace at his command. 'Pray how long must I do this silly work?' 'Thirty years,' replied Jupiter. But, as he had done by the ass and the dog, he reduced this to ten, and the monkey went his way, glad to have thrown off so much of his burden.

"Resolving to end this nonsense, Jupiter now went to work and created

man, who was to be master of these other creatures, and to avoid all this murmuring and wondering, he so puffed him up with vanity that this new animal, man, conscious of all his great possibilities, did not appeal to Jupiter to ask any reason for his being. And the creator felt pleased over his last piece of work, until this man came to him filled with praise for his having accomplished such a wondrous thing. 'And how long, oh gracious master, am I to enjoy all these gifts of mine?' Then the god

YAUCO RIVER, NEAR YAUCO.

replied, as he had to the others, 'Thirty years have I allotted to each creature.'

"'Too short a time!' groaned the man. 'Thirty years will be gone before I have fairly begun to do my work. Only thirty years in which to develop this wonderful intellect you have given me! Only thirty years in which to search out the wondrous secrets you have concealed just beyond my vision! Only thirty years in which to work and do great deeds, in which to serve and praise thee! Oh, my creator, make the term longer, lest I fail to meet thy expectations.'

"At this Jupiter frowned darkly. 'Must I always be found fault with? But stay! I have a few years at my disposal, which I can better give you than not. It will relieve me vastly. First, there are the twenty years

the ass refused, — they shall be added to your thirty, in which you shall labour and sweat to earn your livelihood. To the fifty, I will give you the twenty of the dog's, that he scorned, and from fifty to seventy you watch over what you have already done, and snap and snarl at what younger men are doing. To seventy, I will add the twenty years of the monkey, during which you shall grin, and mimic, and chatter over the follies of the past, making yourself generally foolish, and the butt of all jokes. These are the sum of all the years I have for you, so depart and make the most of them.' "

Leaving us to make what we can of this old-time Spanish allegory, and to admire the wide vista unfolded to our gaze, the aged narrator left his post to refill his pipe. The view from this lofty eyrie is worth all the effort it has cost us to make. From this vantage-ground is to be seen the most productive and picturesque plain on the island, holding in its midst the towns of Cabo Rojo and San German. At its back rises a mountain range, terraced with the foot-hills, between which flow the rivers Rio del Rosario, Buey, and Rio Grande, which have their source in the midst of the highlands. Over the tree-tops we catch the glimmer of blue waters, where the placid Caribbean Sea lazily washes the shore.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOMES OF THE PEASANTS.

THERE are three routes from Mayaguez to Ponce, situated a little west of midway on the southern coast. One of these is by a coast vessel around Aquila Point, the southwestern extremity, the Land's End of Porto Rico. The second, and really the latest, is by the belt railroad, nearly completed, and keeping within sight of the sea for most of the way. The third, which requires more time, greater exertion, and more hardship, but affords a grander idea of the inland country, is the overland trail through the heart of "the Black Hand Country." We choose this course, and set apart six days in which to make the journey, providing we meet with no mishap.

By going this way, we shall miss the old deserted port of Guanica, now a historic spot, made so by its becoming the landing-place of the invading American army during the recent war with Spain. We are told that this is one of the finest harbours on the coast, and is likely, under the new régime, to become again a place of importance. A great change is taking place in Porto Rico in this respect, and some towns are being completely revolutionised, not all of them to their advantage. The building of new roads and opening up better communications with the interior towns is the foremost agency in doing this. Until the shriek of the iron horse had awakened the solitude of the inland districts, and good roads began to take the place of the old trails, no town gained any size or importance that did not have the advantage of being situated close by the sea. The south shore has four ports of importance, Guanica, Guayanilla, Ponce, and Arroyo. On the east are two, Humacao and Naguabo, while the north has the same number, San Juan and Arecibo. The west has also two, which we have described, Aguadilla and Mayaguez. The southern coast, as a whole, is not well explored, but has more indentations and corresponding points of land than the remainder of sea-line in proportion to the distance.

One of the few good highways is that which encircles the island, and connects the more important towns, but there are gaps in this; it has no good bridges, and, for the greater part of each year, is little better than a river of mud and water. One of the best sections connects Aguadilla and Mayaguez. There are links or branches running from other villages to connect them with these belt towns that are fairly passable in the dry season, but unfit for even a horseman to pass during the rainy season. For interior communication, nothing more ambitious has been undertaken than a mule-path a couple of yards in width, winding over steep hills, twisting around sharp curves of rock, now hanging on the pinnacle of some dizzy height, or anon descending into some dark valley, where the sun at noontime does not penetrate.

HARBOUR OF GUANICA.

With such a prospect of travel ahead of us, but with the promise of a natural wealth of scenery, such as Porto Rico alone can afford, we set forth from the "Gate of Gold," as Mayaguez has been poetically named, mounted on a stout, sure-footed native horse, and accompanied by a guide who knows every foot of the island upon our hundred-mile trail. As if to give us good courage with which to begin our journey, the first stage of the trip is over an excellent road, macadamised after Porto Rican style. This is done by first seeking a level foundation, over which is laid a thick layer of crushed rocks, that has to be well packed and rounded, when a layer of earth is spread over it. This is pressed firmly down, and covered with ground limestone, which is also pressed and rolled until the surface becomes smooth, hard, and glossy. Whatever it may be during the rainy period, it makes a fine road in the dry season.

Our first stopping-place is a half-way station, where we tarry to bait our horses, and to rest ourselves, for no Porto Rican moves with undue haste. So far, the country has been less broken than it was in the direction we

last took, but there is a sure indication of hills enough ahead, with a broad fertile vega behind. The haciendas of apparently well-to-do planters appear with mathematical precision along the way, all of them bearing on the arch of the wooden gateway leading to the residence, which stands a little back from the road, some high-sounding name, that has a decidedly musical ring in its utterance.

Another nine miles of this road, and of these picturesque farmhouses, brings us to the mountain hamlet of Las Marias, which has a post-office, two theatres, two casinos, and a telegraph station, besides having the distinction of being situated at the head of travel. Beyond this noisy town, for it has the most noise, in proportion to its size, of any place on our route, the highway shrinks into a mere cattle-path or sheep-track, such as we remember on the old New England farm. Only there is this against the Porto Rican trail: the formation of the soil does not permit the hard surface of the cow-path winding around the hillside or through the valley, and these are frightfully gullied and uncertain footing. However, we have promised ourselves to do no repining, and determined to meet whatever obstacles lie in our pathway with good courage, we look about to note our surroundings. The view from this eminence is magnificent, ample reward for our travel so far. Toward the north and east, we gaze out over twin mountain ranges, which we are told we must cross before we complete our journey. On the south, the highlands present a jumbled appearance, summit after summit, each crowned with a cluster of planters' houses, dropped promiscuously upon the landscape. On the west, we catch a glimmer of the sea off Rincon, while on the same shore, farther north, the calm waters off Aguadilla lie like a glistening sheet in the distance. On what are called the Pepino Hills rising in this direction, we discover a piece of growth, which, we are told,

MAIN STREET, COUNTRY VILLAGE.

is a little section of the aboriginal forest, now owned by the government.

Las Marias having small attraction for us, we gladly bade adieu to its curious inhabitants, the last person that we saw being a solitary planter standing in the solitary door of his solitary house, which rested on the crest of a solitary mountain peak, while he watched us with unvarying gaze till we had ridden past and down the steep descent. The last that we saw of him, he was watching us still, and for aught we know he is there yet. It is evident that the trail we were following had, at some remote period, been wide enough for a cart-road, but heavy rains had so long made

TYPICAL PORTO RICAN PLANTER AND HIS FAMILY.

of it a river-bed, that it was gullied out along the middle, and we were obliged to pick our way upon the rim of this precarious pathway. When we had safely made this mile of descent and were thanking our stars that we had escaped serious mishap, we found ourselves at the foot of another thousand-foot rise. This path soon proved even worse than the first might have been in descending, and for rods at a time the crooked trail wound around the outer edge of a narrow shelf of rock. The care and sagacity with which our horses stepped from point to point was remarkable. But the finest stepping on the part of the guide's wiry little animal did not save him from a tumble over the brink of the chasm. With more than two hundred feet of jagged descent looming below, it looked as though man and beast were doomed to be killed. But he was agile

enough to slip off the horse's back just as the creature rolled over backward, and started down the rocky bank. It was a thrilling sight, and all that saved the animal was a clump of bushes growing in the side of the declivity. Somehow, in turning over it struck against these, and there it hung squirming in mid-air! A severe struggle must have freed the horse from his awkward position, and caused him to have rolled down to certain death. The animal seemed to know this, and he lay there on his back as motionless as it was possible for him to keep. As soon as we had recov-

COFFEE PLANTATION.

ered somewhat from our fright, we went to its rescue. It took us fully two hours of hard work to enable the horse to get back into the path. Except for a few bruises and scratches, the tough creature was uninjured. But it was one chance in a thousand, both for it and its rider.

Nearly two hours of stumbling and climbing, now up, now down, now through a thicket of coffee-bushes, now over the bed of some stream, now under an archway of overhanging vines, and always the same narrow trail, the same uncertain footing. We did not see a house for miles, but ever and anon a ruined plantation, the buildings burned by some Porto Rican

labourer aroused against his employer during the recent trouble, was to be seen. These reminded us that we are entering the heart of the "Black Hand" region, which gained this unenviable name from the frequency of the raids made against its inhabitants by an offended labouring class.

Lares, the next town, though only twelve miles from Las Marias, is not reached until after nightfall, and a hard day's ride we have had, notwithstanding that the early part was made so comfortably. It does not help our case at all now by being told that we have not come by the most direct trail. There is a railroad connecting it with Añasco on the coast. It has a population of about four thousand. It may have been due largely to our gratitude in reaching the end of our day's journey, but no centre of population that we saw in Porto Rico appeared so delightful to us. Under the pale light of the southern moon its white-walled buildings, its village square, its high cathedral with its red-tiled roof, and the wide-spreading country around it, made this elevated village a picture of comfort and beauty. Beyond, the way we must go on the morrow, rises another of those steep ridges, but on our right we look complacently down into a valley of great beauty, over which the moonbeams throw a bewitching halo.

Lares is in direct communication, although the road in places is horrible, with Arecibo on the northern shore. It is the centre of a coffee district, from which it is claimed one man alone sends to Arecibo toward two million pounds of the berry. The place shows evidence of thrift and wealth.

The moon possibly lending them an uncommon picturesqueness, the mountains on the west of us, and trending on toward the northern coast, present the wildest and grandest scenery of the highlands that we find in Porto Rico. There is something about these mountain peaks and broken spurs and castellated ridges that we do not see elsewhere. There is a Scottish appearance about them, and yet an element entirely native and tropical. We are told that they are of coral formation, worn and crumbled by years of changing seasons.

We pass certain of these curious walls in the morning as we wend our way along the Lares-Utuado trail, and on closer inspection they look like sandstone, cut and slashed by rain-storms into grotesque shapes. On our right is a sort of caricature of a grim old fortress, with high walls and

towers that seem to have suffered at some furious bombardment made against its ancient sides. We follow the trail for eight or ten miles, often close under these overhanging walls. Scattered along under their shadows are homes of the peasants living in these parts, all showing plain evidence of the poverty of their occupants. What strikes us as the most prominent feature, is the great number of children at play about these mountain

OLD SPANISH BRIDGE.

homes, all of them innocent alike of clothing and of shame for their nakedness.

While in Lares we were treated to a specimen of the better class of Porto Ricans, those whom the government at least allowed to prosper if it did not aid them, here, close by, we see ample proof of the wretchedness of that other more numerous class, those who toil year by year for the mere pittance of living. Under the Spanish rule it was impossible for them ever to become landowners, or even to earn enough to make a decent living. The low plane of life found in China is here practically

duplicated. The highest wages received by these labourers was fifty cents in Spanish money a day, and at this rate not over five months' employment a year was to be obtained. The workman could not support himself and family on this, and to fill in the gap must cultivate a garden patch. This may be done high up on some precipitous hillside, or on the very edge of a cliff. These spots are of little if any real value for tillage, and the peon who works them cannot expect great results. But a few *batatas*,

U. S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS.

a sort of sweet potato, a little rice, some beans and melons, will go a long way in a family trained for generations to be frugal. To those who have been accustomed to look for rice-fields in the lowlands, where they can be irrigated, it is an odd sight to see their prototype on the extreme summit of some mountain, but in Porto Rico one soon comes to look for almost anything. To a startling extent it is a land of contraries. Wherever one turns he sees evidence of a struggle against nature and natural methods, as we look upon them. Everything on the island is done in the

wrong way, and in order to do anything right it must be done wrong, as contradictory as this statement seems. To move forward is to move backward, but the Porto Rican boatman rows with his face toward the bow, as he says, to see where he is going. Articles that we would carry in baskets or boxes are here moved in bags, and vice versa. The Porto Rican gentleman beckons with the same movement we should use to drive a person away. The wonder is that water does not run up-stream instead of according to the law of gravity.

The washerwomen, and they ought to be called by some other name, wash their clothes in the river, for all the warm water they have is heated by the sun. They wash their clothes, then, by literally pounding them so there is not enough fabric left to hold the dirt. They do this by laying them on a rough rock, and then pounding them with a small stone. When they have lacerated the cloth to their satisfaction, they lay it on a smooth stone, and finish the job as they should have begun. Nothing suits them better than a piece of barbed wire, stretched from rock to rock, for a support to dry them upon. There was not a rope clothes-line on the island, and it is doubtful if a piece of hempen cord of any kind, before the advent of Americans with their northern ideas. Before the days of barbed wire, a thorn hedge answered every purpose. Along all of the streams, at any time, the peasant women were to be seen using their rude stone washboards.

PLAZA, UTUARDO.

A further illustration of the system of doing everything contrary to our ideas of the fitness of things is seen in their style of architecture, and the way they build their houses. These are constructed so that the front of the house faces the alley, at what we should call the rear, and the back-side fronts the streets. The paramount thought and purpose in the minds of the builders is the matter of air and light, when they go to work to des-

troy whatever hope they may have had in that direction. No building, under the old régime, could be constructed without a permit from the municipal authority in which the builder lived, and this same power furnished an official architect, who saw that all the rules and regulations of the law were enforced. It was provided that no wall should be less than thirteen feet in height, which would seem to be a good beginning toward acquiring the main objects of light and air. Then, too, it was provided that each dwelling should have an open court at least one-fourth the size of the building.

As if to offset this promising scheme, in the first place, a long hall was partitioned off on the side of the house next this court, and the rooms within opened into this narrow apartment without any windows, and without any ventilation except that which came in through the door, when open. These were considered to be model sleeping-apartments. Those who did not consider that they had effectually cut off the supply of nature's bounties, completed their desires by swathing their heads in dense blankets when they lay down to sleep.

The windows in these houses were really not built for the purpose of admitting those things which we deem so necessary, — light and air. A few rich men had glass in their front doors, but they were put there solely for ornament, while there are no glazed windows. Having made the back yard into the front yard, and named the alley a street, the next thing was, not to encourage anything in the nature of grass, but to remove all trace of such verdure. Thus, the garden was paved with bricks or flat stones. The monotony was thought to have been broken by raising concrete squares or circles near the centre of these brick floors, and these contained a little parched earth, where some stunted plant or shrub was coaxed to eke out a yellow, miserable existence. But not a blade of grass made fresh or green this hot, dreary pavement, which received as much care and concern as we should give one of our lawns. To do worse than this, if that were possible, the rich began to use asphalt instead of brick and stone, because this retained the heat longer than the others!

There is still another sort of house, where less art and skill and expense is apparent. This consists of a framework of poles, lashed together, the tops brought in, and fastened so as to form a cone over a square body. Wide strips of bark, taken from the royal palm on its upper trunk, make

the covering for the walls, and if it was desired to make these especially impervious to rain and the weather, a thickness was also placed inside. These layers of bark are put on after the manner that we lay shingles, — by letting their edges overlap, — and are held in position by thongs. The doorway is simply one strip of bark left off, and a slit cut in another makes a window. Either cocoanut leaves or the rank Guinea grass make all the thatching needed for the roofs. The interior of these primitive huts, which do not rise above the work of the savage races of man-

IN THE INLAND HILLS, HUTS OF THE POOREST CLASS.

kind, is sometimes divided into two or more apartments; sometimes even this is not done. As they seldom exceed ten feet square in size, it will be seen that the room is not large.

As might be expected, the furnishings are in keeping with the building. The eternal calabash and the hammock suffice in most cases. At night, the family, consisting of a man and a woman, with half a dozen children, more or less, and generally more, lie down upon the floor, or swing themselves lazily in the low-hung hammock. It seems sufficient that the dwelling affords shelter from the rain, and from the equally dreaded night air. During the day, the man swings himself in his hammock outside,

smoking, droning over what no one but himself knows, while his female companion, the burden of the work in the field for the time laid aside, sits squat upon her heels, while she chatters like a magpie with some neighbour upon some family matter, or bit of news just brought in from the plantation on the trail above.

The liveliest feature of the home picture is the mud-puddle in the yard, where half a score of naked children, ranging in age from a few months to

A SUBURBAN RESIDENCE IN PORTO RICO.

a dozen years, are building monuments out of mud, the most enduring work they will ever accomplish, or are splashing each other with the filth, until their brown-skinned bodies, with their protruding stomachs, — the result of living entirely on fruit and vegetables, — look like moving mud-barnacles. Between these two stages of life is another, in which the young man reclines at full length on the ground, watching, with furtive glances, between the wreaths of smoke curling lazily above his reed-stemmed pipe, the somewhat haughty young miss who sits not far away,

half concealed, half revealed by the huge palm leaf that she sways languidly to and fro.

Outside the dwelling, where the inhabitants are sure to be found, during the pleasant days, leading their careless, indolent lives, we see more numerous evidences of the common utensils of a household, for it is here the housework is done in fair weather. Eating-dishes, made of calabash, hang against the wall, while once in awhile, where the family must be more than ordinarily removed above the prevailing poverty, glistens a tin cup among the other dishes. A piece of sheet iron generally answers for the vessel to cook in, though sometimes a badly mutilated iron kettle. The food is served in gourd dishes, and carried to the mouth by gourd spoons. Two stones, one of them slightly hollowed, show where the corn has been powdered to meal, the rice crushed, or the coffee berry ground. But there is another aspect of Porto Rican life, not as pleasant as the fair weather living, when the rainy season comes on. Dark, gloomy, and uncomfortable enough are the lives of these simple people when they are forced to seek the shelter of the thatched dwellings, which are soon filled with the smoke that finds slow exit by the narrow opening under the eaves.

The ceremony of marriage has been almost entirely unknown among the peon peasantry of Porto Rico. Few could afford the expense of the written form and the priestly word, and it was so much easier to set up housekeeping in a new *wickiup* under the shade of a friendly palm, and assume the family cares, that there seemed to be small ground for censure. But in this state of marital relation outside the sanction of the law the American government finds itself confronted with one of the most difficult problems of its new rule in the tropics, and not until a new generation of people, educated under the schools of a more progressive order, shall have succeeded the old ones, will the evil entirely disappear.

THE CALLE DE CANDELARIA, MAYAGUEZ.

A WATERFALL NEAR ADJUNTAS.

CHAPTER V.

THE COFFEE PLANTATIONS.

THOUGH the distance from Lares to our next important stopping-place is not greater than that between Mayaguez and the first-named village, we have allotted two days of time to make the journey, and thus feel that we have plenty of leisure on our hands. That leisure, however, is mostly taken up in picking our way along the treacherous path. The trail to Utuado crosses three streams, which rise in the mountains to the south and flow north to help form the second river in size on the island, the Rio Grande de Arecibo. The streams flowing toward the northern shore are all deep, rapid rivers, until approaching their end, when they are frequently crossed by sand-bars, or heaped with

sand-domes. They are of slight benefit so far as regards being utilised by craft of any kind.

These streams, the largest of which is the Rio de los Angeles, contain many beautiful cascades and series of waterfalls overhung by the rich tropical growth — by flowering shrubs and dazzling foliage plants that the beholder cannot find language to describe with justice. Porto Rico is the paradise of flowering plants, whose high-coloured blossoms are rivalled in beauty and boldness by the rare tints of the leaves themselves, all clothed in an atmosphere redolent with the mystic alchemy of nature, where the bark of the trees and the foliage of bush and shrub exhale a thousand perfumes, until we are bewildered and astounded at the prodigal display of nature's art and generosity.

As the mountains flatten away into broad meadows, and the cascades are exchanged for the sand-bars, the landscape is dotted with the plantations of rich owners, their homes encircled with leafy banana-trees and overlooked by tall palms. Here and there are coffee, sugar, and cotton plantations, separated by rows of lemon or orange trees, making a delightful picture of rural comfort and contentedness. This is one of the most attractive parts of the island.

Seated at the foot of this happy scene, with its feet bathed in the limpid tide of old ocean, but depending on the river for its means of transportation, is the second city in importance on the northern coast, and the first in attractiveness to the mariner coming in from some distant port. It is like other Spanish towns in general appearance, its most prominent building, as seen from the distance, being the tall cathedral, which appears to rise from a city of thatched roofs. At the foot of this sacred edifice is the city plaza, with other public buildings forming the sides of the square. These buildings are of wood or brick, the handsomest being a wooden theatre. The town hall is built of rubble masonry, and after the style of those described. Arecibo has a population of eight thousand, is the capital of a jurisdiction of thirty thousand, and stands on a peninsula about fifty miles by rail from San Juan.

Though counted as one of the two harbours on this coast, it is in reality nothing better than a roadstead, and dangerous mooring when wind and storm unite against the mariner. The merchandise is taken from the larger craft by lighters to the river sand-bar, when it has to be reloaded in

flatboats, that are pushed up the river with long poles, and by dint of much hard work. Good roads threaten to take from Arecibo much of the importance that it now claims.

A feature of the landscape that awakens enthusiasm in the visitor is a vertical rock rising to a height of three hundred feet, named El Concejo, and holding, about one hundred feet from the ground, the entrance to a grotto of great beauty.

The longest rivers on the island seek a northerly course, while those next in importance flow westward. The streams of the other sections,

THE "FALLS OF THE CHIEF" ON MAD RIVER, NEAR YAUCO.

sometimes swollen to abnormal size by the fall of rain, are all short. A marked feature of these streams, flow which way they may, is the broad alluvial plains near their mouths. The northern rivers are the silvery belts that bind together a series of bottom-lands, never becoming wide enough to be considered plains, but in most cases exceedingly fertile. In the wild, narrow, precipitous gorges above these, the inhabitants live on the sides of the steep banks, where it does not seem possible to find habitation. The mountain region all over the island is etched by these streams, while below this mass of peaks is another division of landscape, the foot-hills, which look like stepping-stones to the highlands, gradually

smoothing out and flattening as they approach the sea. An idea of the voluminous water supply of the island is given by the fact that with a coast-line of about three hundred and sixty miles, it has forty-six streams deserving the dignity of being called rivers, which find their way to the sea. The northern slope is best favoured in this respect, and has seventeen rivers rising in its mountains and watering its plains. On account of the greater amount of rainfall in this part of Porto Rico, they are larger than those elsewhere. But even in the south, where it sometimes goes a year without raining, the streams never become wholly dry. The rivers on the north coast are well stocked with fine fish, some of them weighing as much as two hundred pounds.

But we leave at our backs the dense thickets of guava-trees, set out by the coffee-planters to protect their favourite shrub, loaded with its reddening berries, and plod wearily over the mud bottoms of the inland streams. Ahead are more mountains to climb, more narrow gullies to thread, more dizzy cliffs to scale, where it would make one light-headed did he not always keep his gaze fixed on the scene above him. But the panorama is sufficiently beautiful to hold the attention, while the careful pony picks its way along, now descending until its back stands at an angle of forty-five degrees, now climbing out of the hollow around a sharp corner, where a most careful poise has to be made, and the fore feet planted solidly against the side of the rock before the rear hoofs can be brought around beside their mates.

And even where we pick our way in this tremulous manner, expecting every moment to be sent rolling into the valley, half a thousand feet below us, we are amazed to see patches of maize and rice, though how they are cultivated, and the crops harvested, is beyond our comprehension, unless it be done by the workmen being lowered from the top by ropes. This cannot be the secret, however, for at one place we see half a dozen peons plowing with an ox one of these garden plots swinging in mid-air, a thousand feet above the river that sings merrily at the bottom. But, at sight of the plough, we forget even the peril of the solitary ox, moving patiently on the brink of the precipice. Shade of Tubal Cain, what an implement of cultivation! The ploughshare is simply a block of wood, tipped with iron at the point, and having a piece of a small tree, as straight as it grew, for a handle, while into this, a short distance above

the foot, has been mortised another and longer piece of wood for the beam. This, we are told, is a sample of the farming tools which have been used for hundreds of years by a people that have lived entirely by agriculture.

At last we are rewarded with a broad view of country from the top of the mountain we have been climbing tediously for three hours. It is pleasant to look back upon, this mountain trail, which spins down into the distance like a thread, growing fainter and fainter, until we lose it in the bog below. We can see now how much of what looks to be needless climbing

A PORTO RICAN STREAM IN DRY WEATHER.

we have done. Why did this path wind up here at all, instead of keeping under the shade of that rank vegetation? Where the growth gets its nourishment is a mystery. But coming back to the trail, or rather our trail of questions, why did we have to cross that arm of rock and double on our track at the other side of the ravine for more than a mile? Was it to make us endure another climb, where the head grows dizzy and the sight swims to look at it? But we do not murmur over trials past. Ahead lies Utuado, nestling in a lovely valley, under its white mantle, set in the midst of cane-fields and acres of green grass, both swaying gracefully under the gentle influences of the breeze. Over this little mountain

hamlet, which finds no counterpart in Switzerland, nor even in New Zealand, but which possesses a beauty of its own, tower the mountains, somewhat robbed of their fierceness by their cloaks of tropical vegetation.

With this pleasant prospect ahead, we enter on the next stage of our journey, descending at a leisurely pace toward the valley, which widens in the vicinity of the town. We are made aware of the importance of coffee cultivation to this place some time before we reach it, by passing

THE TOWN OF UTUADO, NEAR THE CENTRE OF PORTO RICO.

through broad and well-tilled plantations of this profitable crop. Now our way winds under deep and cooling shades, exceedingly inviting after being exposed so long to the torrid rays of the afternoon sun. As if to complete this dream of Elysian magnificence, the murmur of water comes to our ears, growing louder and stronger as we advance, until the steady drum-beat of a waterfall drowns the hoof-strokes of our tired horses. This is the same river, the Rio de Grande Arecibo, which finds the sea, fourteen miles away, at the capital of the district, and we suddenly discover that our trail ends with the road connecting this town of coffee plan-

tations with the other. It is a fine road, and the stream is spanned by a handsome iron bridge. We are between the mountains now, and after passing the large cemetery, where repose the dead of the city, we find ourselves in Utuado, with tidy streets, pretty houses, an air of general prosperity, and a population of nearly four thousand.

The town is divided into two parts, one the collection of the better class of dwellings and the places of business, and the other lying outside of the limits of the better portion, a village of thatched huts and swinging hammocks, which our army in Porto Rico aptly named "Little Egypt." Of course, the town proper contains a plaza, — no Spanish town would be considered "finished" without this square,—and it has its cathedral, another invariable feature; but of more vital importance than all of the other buildings are the coffee-mills and the white-tented market. The last, each Sunday morning, is a scene of lively interest.

MAIN STREET, UTUADO.

We conclude to stop overnight at a coffee-planter's home, and would say that only those who participate in the hospitality tendered even a stranger by a well-to-do Porto Rican can realise the open-hearted generosity so natural to him. His *hacienda* may be meagre and barren in its interior appearance; that is not, however, a sign of his inability to procure these necessaries of living, but owing rather to the miserable condition of the roads over which it would have to be transported from the seacoast. His home life is severely plain, owing mainly to the same cause. But what he and his family lack in Western world furnishings, they more than make up in polite generosity, in flowers, and in enthusiasm. Of course, there are exceptions to this, as there are to every rule, and there are those still on the island with enough of the love for what was and is Spanish, to look with distrust upon an American; but these are the exception, and the way the average Porto Rican opened his

arms to the newcomer from across the ocean, the representative of a race radically different from his in every manner, and who had nothing to offer in perfect harmony with his lifelong teachings, was remarkable. And if it was a case of all to gain and nothing to lose, — and so it appears to be on the surface, — we have only an added ground for believing in the sincerity of the welcome.

Of the four leading industries of the island, coffee, sugar, tobacco, and fruit culture, the first ranks as the most important. It not only affords a good income to the planter and the exporter, but it brings fair wages to a large number of labourers. Perhaps the most desirable feature about the industry to an American is the fact that it thrives best in those regions where he would like best to live, in the mountainous districts where pure air and good spring water are free. The one great drawback has been the poor roads, but the military highway running out of Utuado to its shipping port has caused this place to thrive.

The price of good coffee lands varies largely, but averages from seventy-five to one hundred dollars an acre. Some sell as high as five hundred dollars, but this means land when it is at the zenith of growth, say about five years after setting, and when the location is favourable for reaching the market. Other lands, perhaps just as well adapted to the cultivation, but in their first year and unfavourably situated, have been sold for as low a sum as fifteen dollars an acre. Unlike Cuba, Porto Rico has few acres suitable for cultivation which have not at some time been under production. Even if the task in hand be the clearing of the virgin soil, it is done with far less expense than on the sister island, for the reason that the Porto Rican forest is not as dense as that of the other, nor does it seem to spring up with wild growth as spontaneously.

Under the new system of affairs, no doubt great improvements will be made in coffee planting, as in everything else. Under the old methods it was done in a haphazard manner. First the land was prepared with the rude tools at command, and then the seed was thrust into the ground in very much the same manner as our forefathers planted corn on burned lots. The next thing necessary to do was to make provision to have suitable shade to protect the expected plant. So at the same time of planting the coffee-bean, the *platano*, or sometimes the *melango*, a sort of lily with a big root and a large top, are selected to answer for the first year. Pro-

vision later on is made by planting the small guava, which is a quick grower, does not take up much room at the foot, but has a thick, umbrella-shaped top, admirably fitted to shade the growning coffee-shrubs. As the latter become small trees, they shed their berries, which sprout in the moist soil and make new plants for transplanting. Banana-plants are also sometimes utilised for the purpose of shade, and leaving those coffee-plants that do not come too near to the parent stem, it is easy to see that

COFFEE PLANTATION.

in a few years a growth which looks at a distance more like a thicket than a cultivated plot covers the ground. Seldom, not even among the cherry orchards of Japan, or the apple orchards of New England, does one see a finer and more promising flower garden than a coffee grove in full blossom, the white flowers clinging close to the slender, uplifted branches of the tree, which sways with rhythmical motion under each gentle undulation of the breeze. Even when the flowers have been followed by the green berries, the picture has lost little of its native charm, and when these bead-

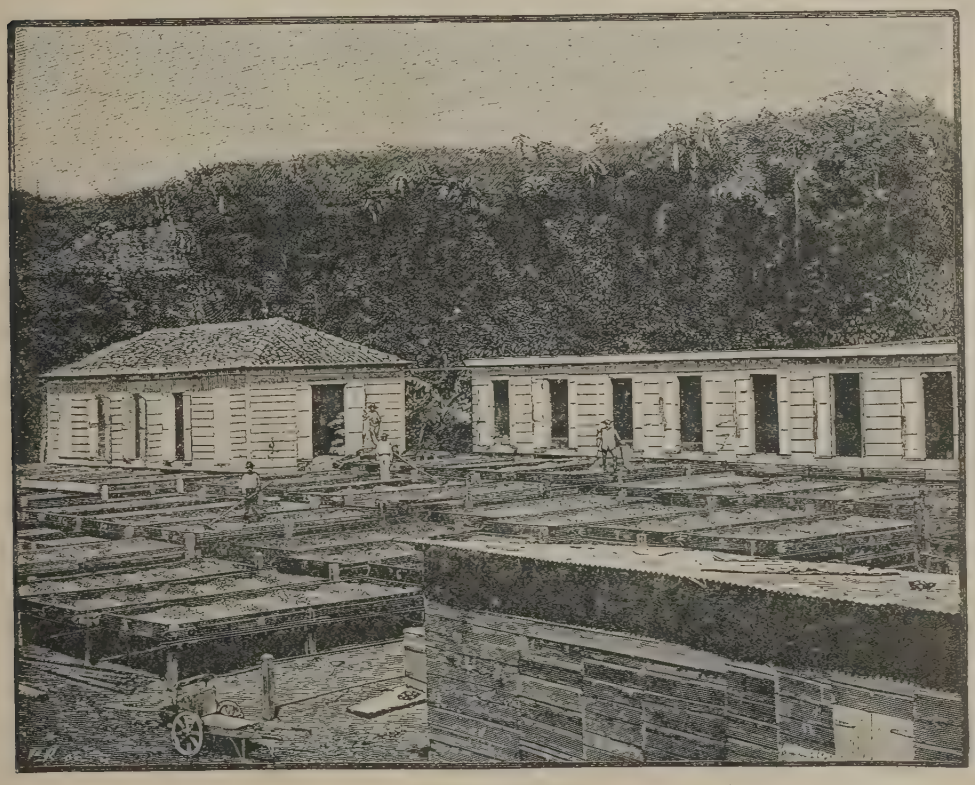
like rows strung on the slender shoots turn to their deep, gorgeous crimson in October, the original has been improved.

And here, the ripened berry ready for the picking, is repeated day by day a scene of rustic beauty that outrivals the much-vaunted glory of the vineyards of the Old World. As the first rays of the sea-wet sun kiss the forehead of old El Yunque, looming like a sentinel in the distance, the little army of coffee-pickers may be seen coming out of the odd-looking thatched-roof huts on every hand, some with gray heads and wrinkled faces, others with hair that vies in hue with the raven; some moving with quick, elastic steps, others trudging laboriously toward their scene of toil; some mere children clad at the most in a single strip of faded cloth, others with raiment, though sadly torn and tattered, speaking a kinder word for human decency; some bright-eyed, comely girls, stopping now and then to whisper a secret to a companion or to cast shy glances at some dusky swain, some with snatches of song on their lips, others with low murmurs of discontent, all carrying slung over their shoulders by a band a small basket to hold their pickings, or with these home-made utensils balanced upon their heads, as they swing carelessly along. Altogether it is hard to match this train for its rare mixture of pain and pleasure, of peace and poverty, for its still stranger mixture of the ties of races, where on the defiant countenances are to be seen traces of the blood of old Spain, of France, of the heart of the black continent, and it may be of the ancient people of the isles of the Caribbees.

Soon the dense grove of coffee-trees rings with the songs of the women, who will throw off whatever depression may hang over their unsatisfactory lives, while the laughter of children and the commands of men in charge add to the confusion of the scene. Gradually the sounds become less mirthful and resonant as the day wears on. Some of the little ones, who have been given the lower bushes to pick, have tired of the task so much beyond their years, and have fallen asleep under the shade. The day spent, this same body of workers may be seen plodding wearily homeward, the merriment fled from the black eyes, and the elasticity from the nimble feet. The men and women now are loaded with their heaping baskets of berries, some struggling up the steep hillsides, others carefully letting themselves down from a dizzy height, some still balancing their baskets on their heads, others carrying them still slung over their shoulders, a mother

carrying in addition to her load of berries her child fast asleep in her arms, while other tots, scarcely larger, stumble along tired and sleepy. Again the torrid sun tips the crest of old El Yunque, but it is with the silver of sunset and not the gold of morning, and, as if ashamed of what he has done, or to seek forgetfulness for the scenes he has witnessed, he bids farewell to the island garden and disappears into the western waves.

The day's gathering of berries has to be taken to the weighing-room of

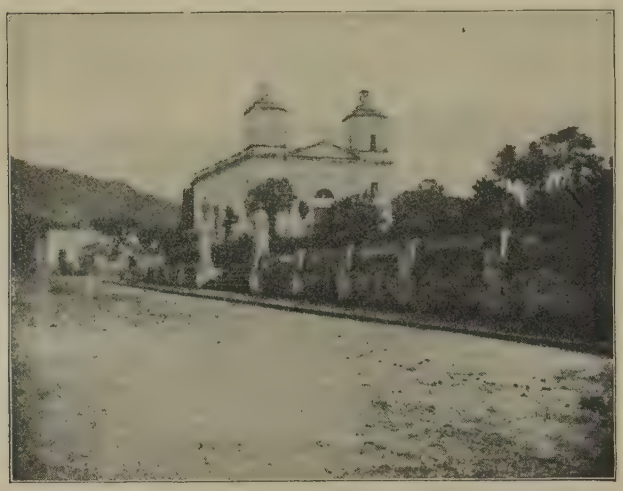


DRYING COFFEE.

the plantation, where the overseer sets down long rows of figures, as basket after basket tips the scales, and one after another of the weary train receives his or her wages for the day's picking. Here is heard the loudest murmuring for the day, as many believe, not always without reason, that they have not been credited with as many pounds of berries as they are entitled to. The price for picking varies somewhat, but $1.50 a hundredweight is about an average. As an able-bodied man is able to gather about fifty pounds, this would bring him seventy-five cents for his long hours of labour. This, taken with what his family has earned,

may swell the amount to $2.00. But later in the season, for the coffee berries ripen along at their leisure, as it would seem, the picking will be slower, and his wages will drop more than half that sum. Then, too, the cultivating and the picking do not last more than three or four months, and since he has little to do the rest of the year, that will bring him in any money, it will be readily seen that his chances for owning a plantation are far from flattering. In addition to all this, there are really two labourers where one is needed; it is not a wonder, then, that the peon population of Porto Rico is poor; the real wonder is it exists at all.

The berries are next stowed away in bins or sacks, until they can be "hulled," that is, run through the pulping machine, which removes the outer shell or covering of the two beans inclosed within. Both bean and pulp fall upon an inclined, moving wire sieve, when the first drop through into the receptacle situated to receive them, while the husks pass down to the refuse pile. The berries are then either sun-dried, by spreading on a cement floor, or else dried by heat in buildings erected expressly for the purpose.



CHURCH, ALTUADO.

Ever since reaching Mayaguez, we have been reminded of the great injury done all kinds of enterprises on the island by the hurricane in August, 1899. Though below the line of these tropical storms, Porto Rico has a melancholy record in this respect, as many as eighteen disastrous tempests of this kind having swept the island since 1515, three of them, in 1782, 1825, and 1899, having been especially destructive to life and property. Neither the rich nor the poor, the planter nor the peon, the farmer nor the stock-raiser escapes this universal peril. The loss to the coffee industry alone, from this hurricane of August 8, 1899, has been estimated to have reached the amount of 25,000,000 pesos, while the loss of life was appalling. In the Arecibo district, it was estimated that the

damage done to houses and crops would reach $900,000 in gold, and in the valley of the Rio de Grande over a thousand persons disappeared, and were supposed to have been drowned by the sudden and swift rise and overflow of the river. Sixty-five square miles of lowlands were submerged along the coast, causing a vast amount of damage. By this storm, 250,000 persons were thrown upon the charity of the government, which did all in its power to alleviate their sufferings.

SUGAR PLANTATION.

Raking up the straw after the cane has been cut.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MOUNTAIN FLORA.

THE next stage of our trip is practically all up-grade, following, for most of the time, within sight or sound of the river, which has its source in the heart of the dividing ridge of the island, the Mata Platano. We pass through mountain hamlets on our way, and through a scenery that cannot well be equalled for its wild beauty. Winding in and out of the twists and turns of the broken frontage of the country, we look ahead, ever and anon, to think that our path must surely end at some frowning rock, but upon reaching the expected terminus, we find that the trail, with a jump of a few feet, begins just above, or a little below this object, as the fancy of the first traveller may have dictated. This thought leads us to inquire how long ago this passage was made, and by whom it was picked up. We ask this of one of the Porto Ricans, who peers down upon us from his eery home on the very pinnacle of a rocky needle piercing the cerulean space overhead. He shakes his head, too ignorant or too lazy to answer. We become dizzy looking up to the humble cottages, grass-roofed huts we should call them in plainer language, hung on the steep

mountain, and propped up on the lower side by trembling poles. We wonder whether they will stand long enough for us to get past, and breathe more easily to think the danger is over, when, lo, a whole row of them appears ahead of us, on our right.

Out from one of these huts springs a light-footed girl, swinging a calabash over her dark-crowned head, as she leaps from rock to rock, with the agility and speed of a chamois in the Alps. She does not pause in her airy flight until she reaches one of the many silvery fountains bubbling out from the mountain, and affording the most delicious beverage in the world. At sight of us, she shows her first appearance of fright, and she is, doubtless, on the point of fleeing when we signal for her to come to us. At this she hesitates, as if uncertain whether to continue her flight or not. Our guide, understanding better than we the proper course to pursue, invites her down to a level with the trail, in that manner which we should have employed to send her away. In answer to him, she comes, and at his request coyly hands us the odd cup, brimming with the nectar Jupiter sipped with so much pleasure. We ask her name, when she modestly shakes her head, and seeing that we have quenched our thirst, bounds lightly back to the fountain to replenish the gourd.

ENTRANCE TO CEMETERY, ALTUADO.

A little higher up the ascent, and we come in sight of a second trail winding across an arm of rock where it seems impossible for any creature to gain a foothold. We question our guide in regard to this, when he smiles, showing two rows of very black teeth, as he replies that it is the same route over which we have passed within half an hour! No better illustration is needed of the bewildering course that we have been following for half a day. But if fraught with more or less peril, and filled with hardships, it is not without its pleasure, and is well worth all of our pains.

We are trying to follow with the eye a broken offshoot of our path creeping up the steep like a long, slender snake to a coffee-planter's home on the summit, when a voice of song breaks pleasantly upon our ear, and we pause to listen. The words are strange to us, but the tone of the singer, the depth and wealth of the musical notes, are such as come only from the throat of a sweet-voiced maid from the wilds of that ravished land where such a large percentage of the population of the West Indies have most unwillingly come. Nor are we mistaken in our hasty conclusion, for even as the thought enters our mind the singer steps boldly into view, then, at the unexpected sight of us, pauses in the midst of her advance. A wild, picturesque figure she presents, too, such as is met with seldom save in the islands of the tropics, which seem especially adapted to raising such a population. Her ancestors, not very far removed, may have roamed in their primitive life amid the jungles of the Congo or the Niger, but she has unmistakably the strain of another race, which blends happily with that of her own people, and gives shapeliness to feature and limb. The sisters of this dusky tropical belle have been the recipients of much fulsome praise from the haughty sons of old Castile, both here and in Cuba. Somewhere we have met an expression of the charms of one of them that had another source, which is so apt and truthful that we cannot refrain from giving it here, with due apology to the author:

"Her skin excelled the raven plume,
Her breath the fragrant orange bloom,
Her eye the tropic beam.
Soft was her lip as silken down,
And mild her look as evening sun
That gilds the Cobre stream.

"The loveliest limbs her form composed,
Such as her sister Venus chose
In Florence, where she's seen,
But just alike, except the white,
No difference, no — none at night,
The beauteous dames between."

Casting a half defiant, half frightened glance at us, the "sable Aphrodite" gives her dusky head a toss which must have unseated a bowl less skilfully placed on its crest, and resuming her song, follows her way down

U. S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS, PORTO RICO.

the valley, leaving behind only the dream of the picture we have seen. But the melody of her voice reaches us for several minutes, and lightens our progress for more than a mile.

We pass the night at a small coffee-planter's, and enjoy his genial hospitality, and the following day reach the little town of Adjuntas, which has a population within a hundred of two thousand people, where a mixed blood of Spanish and Porto Rican whites prevails, with a sprinkling of

BUILDING USED FOR MILITARY HOSPITAL.

negroes. We are now less than twenty miles from the southern coast, though the mountains rise still between us and our destination. We are told that this was the heart of the "Black Hand" region, where, in the critical times of war, the black hand of death was painted on nearly every door by these outlawed artists and slayers, more terrifying, we imagine, at a distance than at nearer range. But the days of war are happily over for Porto Rico, and she has been fortunate to escape with such a small loss of life and property. In fact, this island has been most

fortunate, in this respect, from the close of the Spanish massacre of the natives to the present day. A great contrast to outraged Cuba, whose cemeteries seem to be filled with the victims of revolutions, and whose soil has been fertilised by the blood of the slain.

Our last four hours' ride was over the noted wagon-road constructed by the late General Henry, when he made his remarkable march upon Arecibo during the war with Spain. In order to push forward his artillery, he set his men at work with pick and shovel, levelling the mountain-side and widening the former narrow pathway to a uniform breadth of fifteen feet. A thousand men worked here with might and main for two weeks, and it was believed had accomplished a good result. But they saw their error as soon as the rain began to fall, and their proud road became an impassable way of deep, slimy mud. Landslides followed, so that the old track was better than the new. Owing to climatic influences, the only lasting and passable road to be constructed in Porto Rico is made by filling the bed with crushed rock or brick.

We expect to reach Ponce, of which we now hear frequent mention, on the day that we set out from Adjuntas, but the first few miles are enough to dampen our ardour as well as our brows with perspiration by reason of the wicked climbing that we are forced to make. Along this picturesque way we are given the choice of following the "road," that is nothing but a continuous bed of mud which possesses qualities that the boldest advertisers of glue dare not claim, and which, when the struggling horse effects the release of a foot, closes with a clap that sounds like the report of a pistol, or of keeping on the rim, barely a foot in width, where the foundation is rock, and the hundred-foot precipice on the right hand is lined with rock, too. Preferring a quick death to a lingering one of suffocation, we choose the outer way, and reach the top in safety — no, without any broken bones; for there is no such thing as riding in safety a Porto Rican trail.

Upon looking back when we have finally gained the summit of this one-sided "backbone" of Porto Rico, we cannot help wondering, as we gaze over the mass of mountains huddled together like peons in a wickiup, where the rich coffee valleys that we know abound in this district have fled to. There does not seem to be a level spot large enough for one to place his foot on. On the other hand, we gaze down

over the southern slope of the island, with a glimpse of the sea in the distance.

We are immediately struck with the difference in the appearance of the landscapes that lie on either side. Two distinct zones of vegetation form the island verdure. One comprises the mountains and the coast plains of the north; the other the lower benches and the plains of the southern coast. The first, with its higher altitudes, has a great warmth and humidity, and the general growth consists largely of deciduous trees of many species, with an undergrowth of fern so tall and dense as to form almost

SUGAR PLANTATION.
Clearing the ground for a new crop of cane.

impassable jungles. Thus this section is clothed in a verdure of perpetual green, while the lower portion on the opposite side of the mountains is more sparsely covered with a flora that has a dry and yellow appearance. The physical aspect of the island is not unlike that of Hawaii.

Though the forests of the mountains are composed largely of the hard woods, these are not separated into distinct classes as in America. Names are very confusing. Thus, when we speak of the guava, it must not be confounded with the tree by that name in Hawaii. Cedars here are not conifers, though the term has such a familiar ring that we look for an old acquaintance. Almonds are not at all related to peaches, while the so-called

gum-trees bear no resemblance to the species of the eucalypti we expected to meet. On the other hand, we are constantly stumbling upon what look like old friends until on closer inspection we are surprised to find we should have been so easily deceived. What looks to be a magnificent specimen of a horse chestnut from a distance, loaded with its drooping clusters of deep red blossoms, on nearer view resolves itself into a leguminous tree, indigenous to the island.

A few of the most important of the woods used by the inhabitants — to name them all would take pages — are the *algarroba*, *ausubo*, *capa blanca*, *capa prieta*, *laurel sabino*, *laurel blanca*, *guayacan*, *moca*, *cedro cojoba*, *maga*, *yaiti*, *palo santo*, *moro*, and *hachuelo*, as they are spelled by the Porto Rican naturalists. Cedro, mentioned sometime since, has ceased to be abundant on the island, and is imported at a cost of $150 per thousand feet. Its wood is of a pale reddish brown colour, and very similar to commercial mahogany. Capa blanca is much used for finish, and for rollers in coffee-mills. It is of a light brown colour, and has very straight grain. Maga should become one of the most popular woods for cabinet-makers. Its wood is of a clear, rich chocolate brown, and it has a surface like satin.

Among other trees, the *palma de grana*, or "royal palm" of Porto Rico, takes high rank. With a slender trunk, tufted at the top with a cluster of leaves, it springs a hundred feet into air, a green shoot, a dozen feet tall, delicate and pointed like a lightning-rod, forming the upper end of the trunk. The heart of this palm is cooked and eaten like a cabbage. The fruit is valuable for fattening swine. Almost anywhere but in Porto Rico this tree would be utilised in many ways, "but in Porto Rico nobody gathers what the earth offers." There are many other species of palms, one of which, the yagua, or "cabbage palm," is useful for covering houses. It is of ash colour, and it has a lofty trunk, larger in the middle and tapering toward its second section, when it again forms a perfect column of seven or eight feet in height, and two feet or more in circumference. This portion is of an emerald green, smooth and beautiful, and it can be denuded of its bark every month without showing injury to the tree.

A close rival to the palm is the bamboo, almost as common here as in China, and growing in graceful, feathery clumps. Its stems are prized for fence-posts, telegraph-posts, and for posts to houses, while its joints make

flower-pots and bowls for holding liquids. A plant useful for making cordage is the *emajagua*, which becomes a small tree in a few years. A mightier specimen of the vegetable kingdom is the lordly tamarind, which grows equally well on the warm coasts or the cool mountains. It has a large, wide-spreading top, and often a trunk from ten to twelve feet in diameter. Its wood is hard, and of a reddish colour. Its fruit has a pleasant taste, and, diluted with water, makes a delicious beverage. Growing

PALM-TREES, MAUNABO, NEAR GUAYAMA.

in the driest regions on the southern coast of the island, is another tree that should become valuable for its spice, the *pimienta*, or allspice. The nutmeg-tree also grows in this region.

One of the loftiest trees on the island is the *ceiba*, which grows to a height of one hundred feet, and with a trunk that is large enough to make a canoe fifty feet long, with a width of twelve feet. This tree produces a great quantity of pods that are filled with a fine substance, which at maturity is called "the wool of ceiba."

This list, incomplete as it is, would be an injustice to the island flora were not mention made of the banana, which occupies a peculiar position between a tree and a plant, growing often from twelve to fifteen feet in height. It is the most useful plant on the island, and its fruit constitutes the staple food of the labouring class. It is more universally cultivated than any other plant, and there is scarcely a hut or an estate where it is not to be seen, its trunk a great roll of leaves, having neither wood nor bark; its overlapping leaves, of a bright green, possess a beautiful lustre. As many as a hundred bananas often grow from a single stalk.

With all its wealth and variety of vegetable growth, it would be singular were the island entirely free from poisonous plants, though the Antilles are remarkably favoured in this respect. There are comparatively no harmful animals, and but few plants and trees that menace the life of man. Porto Rico has three plants that both man and beast avoid. One of these is the *guao*-tree, which has the mysterious power of benumbing the limbs of him who ventures to rest under its shade, while the animal that touches it soon loses its coat. The wood of this tree is used in making beds, because no bug will live upon it, while the borer that dares to try his skill upon it, perishes in the attempt!

STREET SCENE, UTUADO.

More deadly than the guao-tree is another tree, known as the *manzanilla* or *machineel*. This tree is common along the seacoast and banks of the rivers. It has a peculiar trunk, with smooth, delicate bark, that sometimes becomes two feet in diameter. Its beautiful, pear-shaped leaves are set off with rose-tinted flowers that give it an attractive appearance. The entire tree is filled with a milky juice, which exudes in the sun, and if any of this touches the human skin a blister will quickly cover the place. Should any one lie down to sleep under its cooling and inviting shade, as

many have unwittingly done, he would sink into a profound lethargy, from which it would be doubtful if he would ever awaken. The best antidote known is sea-water.

A traveller relates that he was passing through a place, in company with a friend, when, as he was following one of the weary trails of the interior valleys, he was attracted to a tree of dense shade, and was about to sink down upon the earth, feeling a strange languor stealing over him from the intense odour that filled the air; at that moment, however, his friend sprang forward, and, pulling him hastily away, warned him that he was under the deadly manzanillo.

An herb that is avoided by nearly all creatures is called the *tibey*, which somewhat resembles our lobelia. A horse or dog eating of it dies soon after in great agony. Nature, in her wise provisions, arms the animal with the power of discerning the harm likely to come to it from this and other poisonous plants, so that all living things are pretty sure to give the tibey a wide berth.

COUNTRY VILLAGE IN PORTO RICO.

There is still another enemy of this kind known as the cowhage, which thrives best upon a limestone soil. This is a climbing plant, with bean-like pods that bear a strong resemblance to caterpillars; at a distance one of these vines looks as if it were overrun with these creatures. It is covered with a multitude of fine hairs, which sting the skin like nettles. We were told the story of a peon, who made a wager with another that he could jump into the midst of one of the parasites and stand there for five minutes. He won his wager, but he had to be pulled out of the embrace of the deadly vine, and was completely covered with blisters and burns, from which it was more than a year before he recovered.

We saw one of these in the Lares district which climbed what had been a majestic cedar. But as the parasite had wound its hairy tendrils about

the tree, the vine had seemed to stifle its very breath, and when we saw it, merely the trunk and branches of the tree remained, and these alive only with the hateful cowhage, which had given to the cedar it had murdered a foliage of its own, hanging from the lowest to the highest branch a mass of vegetable worms and a coating of hair such as grows upon no living creature. It may be imagined that we gave the ill-fated tree and deadly python-like enemy a swift farewell.

There are many other fruits and plants besides those named, some of which grow both in the south and north sections, while some are confined to one. The most common of the coast border region are the Algarroba, bixia, wax-tree, tamarind, manzanillo, nutmeg, flamboyant. Some of those that thrive in both parts are the tamarind, ceiba, and guana banos. Vines, fig-trees, and pomegranates are frequently seen on the large estates. These thrive well, and bear abundantly, being in fruit the year round. Such fruit-trees of the temperate zone as the pear, plum, apple, cherry, peach, and others, grow luxuriantly here, but are barren of fruit.

U. S. CAVALRYMAN IN TROPICAL SURROUNDINGS.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE MILITARY ROAD.

THOUGH there are no native quadrupeds larger than the agouti, a harmless little animal belonging to the family of rodents, and roaming in the forests without showing any inclination to climb or burrow, and the armadillo, nocturnal in its habits and equally as inoffensive, there were originally a vast number of birds on the islands, some of them fine songsters and others with beautiful plumage. Although many

of these have become extinct, birds are still relatively numerous, and sweet singers are not altogether missed. All domestic fowls do well here. There are no poisonous reptiles that need create alarm, but insects beyond naming abound, grow fat in tormenting the stranger, and have apparently a good time in general. The climate, as in all tropical countries, is conducive to the multiplication and growth of centipedes, scorpions, tarantulas, wasps, mosquitoes, ants, fleas — but we might as well stop here. The Porto Ricans do not seem to mind them, and a dislike for such creatures may be only in the mind of people of the temperate clime.

Our gaze, wandering over the coast hills toward Ponce, rests on areas of dense, chaparral-like flora, which, taken with the thick undergrowth of grass, with the rolling hills, and even with the soil, presents a close analogy to the physical features of the region of Texas bordering on the Lower Rio Grande. This resemblance to American scenery can be seen further by a comparison of the chaparral growth on the limestone hills on our west, with their tree cactuses looking like organ pipes, to the desert flora of California, or the cactus forests of Mexico, made impenetrable by a dense, thorny undergrowth, and rendered hoary and picturesque by a wide-spreading drapery of climbing moss.

Our progress is now easier and more rapid toward the second city of Porto Rico, — Ponce, — and the last half of our journey is made over a well-laid road-bed, along which are many fine-looking country homes. We meet on the way long trains of dust-covered pedestrians, with baskets poised on their heads, while they move forward with a swinging gait which would surely unseat those objects if held in the same manner by any one untrained in the art. They are market-venders from the interior, returning to their homes after carrying their produce into the city. All are barefooted, and they move merrily along, the steady pit-a-patter of their feet keeping up a ceaseless flow of sound not altogether unpleasant, while light hearts find expression in soft, flute-like strains of song.

The importance of Ponce, founded nearly three hundred years ago, and named for the first governor of the island, the renowned Juan Ponce de Leon, is felt before the city proper is reached. It became known as a villa in 1848, and arrived at the dignity of a city in 1877. Very much of the island's history is connected with it, and its future prospect is most flattering. Commercially it is already the most important place on

the island, though situated inland from the wharves and warehouses of La Playa. But this, as has been said, is not unusual with Porto Rican cities.

Ponce stands on what is known as the Playa Plain, two miles in a direct line from the shore, connected with the port by a fine road. Playa has a population of about five thousand, and the city a population in round numbers of twenty-eight thousand. It has many fine buildings of stone and brick, and as a place for foreign residents is one of the best on the island. Situated within easy distance are several health resorts and mineral springs, which, with American improvements, are destined to become both prosperous and noted. The heart of the city is, of course, the expected Plaza, in the centre of which is the *Parque de Bombay*, or headquarters of the fire department, which is a well-equipped and well-trained organisation. Here, too, are seen a stately church, and a market-place, less stately, but solid and substantial, where a great amount of business is carried on. Ponce has some fine hotels, run on a plan not objectionable to an American.

POULTRY SELLER AT PONCE.

One point of interest to tourists is formed by the caves just out of Ponce, but an object of greater account, for several reasons, is the famous military road, connecting this city with the capital of the island, over seventy miles away. Whatever has been and may be said against the other roads, paths, and trails of Porto Rico, here, at least, is to be found the noblest road in the Western Hemisphere, and, with one exception, in the world. It was constructed by the Spanish government, for military purposes, at an expense of four million dollars, and it not only connects the two most important places on the island, but it also penetrates the very heart of Porto Rico's mountains and plains. There is also a branch built from Guayama and its port, Arroyo, connecting with the main line at

Cayey, and helping to form a huge Y, like the mountains of the island. If it were desirable to make one of the trails of the interior, which climb hills steeper than the house roofs and twice as smooth, descend declivities that make the rider dizzy if he dares look down, along razor-edge ridges, from which the sure-footed horse seems almost certain to roll at any moment, and around curves and circles where the tourist comes within a few yards of the spot he had left an hour before, up and down, to and fro, until the brain is in a whirl and the body racked with pain, but an experience in the memory one would not part with under any consideration, the

SUGAR MILL NEAR PONCE, WRECKED BY HURRICANE.

traveller even more owes it to himself that he take the trip by carriage, bicycle, or on horseback over Porto Rico's one great highway, her Military Road.

This cost Spain a vast sum of money, and it cost the inhabitants of the island a vaster outlay of labour and hardship. But there is this difference in the conclusion: save as a proof of monumental work, it has proved of short-lived benefit to the mother country, but to the Porto Ricans it must ever remain a great if an expensive gift. It was begun in 1880, under the military rule of General Sanz, and it was eight years in building, at a cost of $100,000 a mile, pressing into its construction thousands on thousands of peons, who toiled from sun to sun for the pitiable sum of

fifty centavos, besides large gangs of civil and military prisoners working under the watchful eye of bands of soldiers.

The road is macadamised with calcareous stone, broken fine, which forms an almost solid floor. The grade at no place is severe, so that a horse may trot from one end to the other, providing he be given proper rests. Many mountain streams had to be crossed in the construction of the road, and these are spanned by noble stone bridges. Continual vigilance was established at the outset to see that it was kept in a state of repair commensurate with its importance, and worthy of its builders, and for this purpose one-storied houses, with red roofs, called *camineros*, were built at regular intervals, where road-tenders lived, whose only business was to see that the highway was repaired properly.

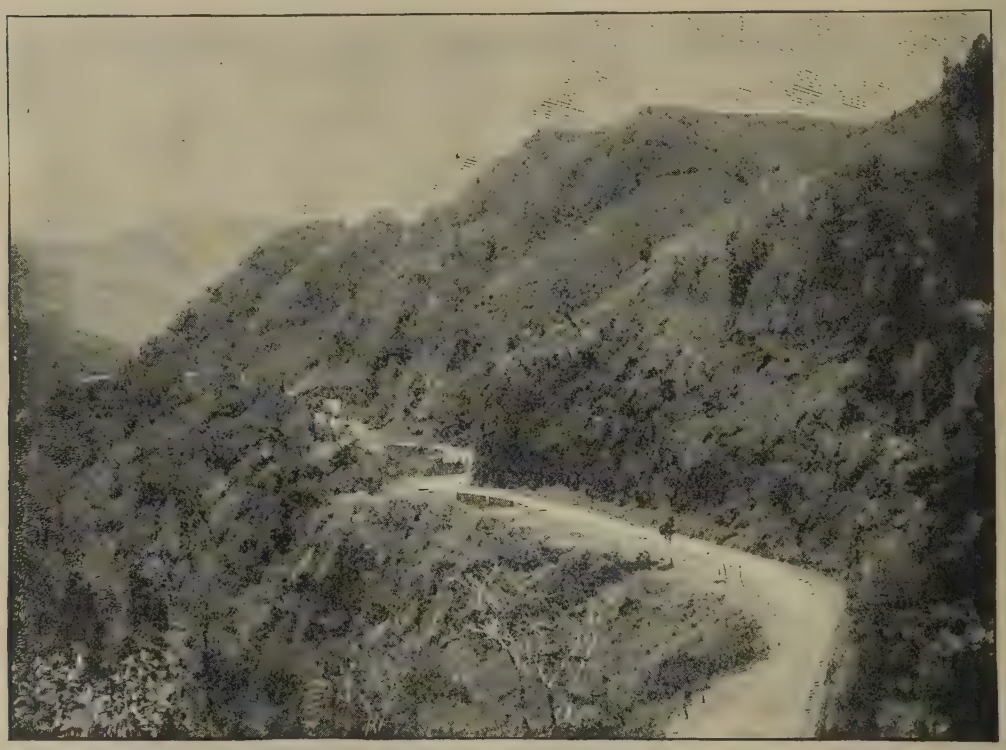
Bidding adieu to Ponce and its Playa Plains, the great coffee districts of Arecibo and Adjuntas, where there is still room found to afford pasturage for vast herds of cattle, we are whirled away over the broad, excellent highway, at a terrific pace, by four small native horses urged on by a negro driver. This is such a change from picking our way slowly along the Utuado trail, that at first we can do nothing but sit still and congratulate ourselves on the transformation. During the initial period of our journey, we leave behind us the last of the suburban residences of Ponce, and the outer rim of huts that border all Porto Rican cities, to find ourselves in a magnificent country penetrated by a magnificent road. Ahead are mountains to climb, wild defiles to thread, and picturesque landscapes to admire; so the past is temporarily forgotten, and we revel in the present delicious dream.

Often, for miles at a stretch, the road runs through a wild country, over torrential streams, which have been known to swell in volume ten feet in a single hour, and subside with an even better record, as soon as the rain was over. We realise that we are gradually going farther and farther from the shore. Our first stopping-place is at Juan Diaz, eight miles out from Ponce, and here we change horses and stop for a brief rest. As we have taken an early start, it is still not far advanced in the morning.

Our next stage in the journey proves to be through a more broken country, while we are aware that we are rapidly approaching the mountain range which we crossed once before, just above Adjuntas. There are

homes scattered along the way, and one river that we cross runs through a narrow defile for a long distance. We leave a small village on our left, said to be noted for the small number of its married inhabitants, less than ten per cent. But this is not bad for Porto Rico, where only one in six is married.

Coamo, our next halting-place, is a town of over three thousand inhabitants, and wealthy in its attractions. A pleasing feature of these Spanish-Indian homes is the number of shade and ornamental trees planted



MILITARY ROAD BETWEEN SAN JUAN AND PONCE.

near at hand. These are also profitable as a source of income, for among them are to be especially noted the lemon-tree, mango, banana, and orange, the large fruit of the latter showing prominently among the green leaves like golden melons. Then there is the village square, surrounded by the most prominent buildings in the place, and at one we see a large silk-cotton tree, which seems to flourish like a native.

Our appearance is the signal for a curious crowd of spectators to come forward, children swarming among the older persons, scampering about in innocent glee and looking as nearly alike as the "two peas in a peck,"

until we come to wonder whether their mothers are always sure they have with them their own offspring. "Children are an ever-present and abundant factor in the domestic economy of a peasant's life.[1] Domestic economy is a fitting term, since it costs nothing to supply the air of day for the lungs of these little waifs, and it costs nothing for their clothes, for they run about in the sunshine and the rain just as God made them, and sleep in odd corners without cover, for the first half-dozen years of their baby lives, while, when older, a single discarded, tattered garment adds to their natural grace the shield of decency. So they live, without expense, and with little tenderness bestowed upon them in the shape of material comforts, though the mother's kiss is often given, and the father pats the little head. They soon toddle, at the command of the mother, to do small errands, to help weed the garden, to bring in a handful of wood for the fire, to dig the tubers for a meagre meal, and lastly, to hold up their tiny hands, and with pleading gain a copper from the passer-by on the roadside. They are a good investment in the family; the majority of them die at an early age, and it costs but a few strained hours to the mother's heart, a bit of cloth for a shroud, and the energy needed to carry the tiny form to the potter's field. Offsetting this is the usefulness of those who, by the laws of the survival of the fittest, pull through with sturdy forms, to pick berries, work in the cane and tobacco fields, and add to the common fund, until, at a varying age, they rebel against the paternal banker, and live for themselves, in poverty and in bondage to the landed kings, just as the generations who came before them."

Coamo is noted for its salt-works and its baths, neither of which the sightseer fails to see. This town is older by four years than Ponce, though fortune has not smiled upon it so broadly. Still, it is a pretty place, and for its baths alone will doubtless become a popular resort, when American tourists and health-seekers turn their gaze toward this new possession of Uncle Sam. It deserves it, too, and will appreciate it beyond doubt.

Our next stage takes us through one of the few passable breaks in the long mountain range, to that mountain settlement just over the dividing ridge, Aibonito. The scene now becomes grander and wilder. The road winds up under some frowning ledge of rock, now hewn into the side of

[1] Dinwiddie, "Porto Rico."

the steep ascent, now hanging over the very rim of some precipice, now spanning a rushing, roaring mountain torrent, now in the clear sunlight, now under the tent-like tops of some forest giant claiming its heritage where a tree in the northern clime could never have survived its shrub-days, and ever the blue-tinted peaks overhead, and the green-tinted valleys underneath. It can be compared to no scenery in the world, and though it may have its equal in attraction, it cannot have its superior. It lacks the awe-inspiring grandeur of the volcanic domes of Hawaii, it lacks

THE COAMO RIVER, AT COAMO.

the pictorial tranquillity of Japan, the sublime forcefulness of the Yellowstone region, but its richly carved landscape, whose rugged lines are softened by a foliage that reflects the treasures of a genial sun and a rain-bountiful sky, need not borrow from these. It has charms of its own quite sufficient.

Where the road climbs the steep ascent of the central cone of the mountain range, we come to the great wall from the embrasures of which the Spanish guns glowered down upon the scene below in readiness for our troops when they should attempt to pass this impregnable mountain

GENERAL VIEW OF SAN JUAN.

defence. Fortified in the trenches behind this barrier, the Spanish might have had it all their own way, in at least one battle against American arms. Fortunately for the three thousand soldiers waiting to be led into this trap, the welcome news of peace came before the fateful movement was accomplished. Behind rises the bare and perpendicular rock for more than half a hundred feet, above which line it slopes backward more gradually for two hundred feet more, this forehead of the old man of the mountain covered with a green shrubbery. In front the side of the sierra drops abruptly down into the valley hundreds of feet below. Winding up the rock-hewn ascent for more than a mile, the men behind the guns at the top had all the odds in their favour. But the embrasures are empty now, and the day may never come when they will again bristle with an enemy's artillery.

The view from the top of this ascent is wide and grand, one of the finest in Porto Rico. Away to the south, extending to the seashore, rise peak after peak capped with a deathless verdure; on the north stretches a still wider sea of mountains, looking in the distance like the huge billows of the ocean rolling in toward the land. But the driver, with less enthusiasm than his passengers over the vista of wild country, urges his horses ahead, grateful that the ridge dividing the island has been passed and that the descent into the central plains of the islands has been begun.

AIBONITO, BETWEEN SAN JUAN AND PONCE.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SOUTHEASTERN SLOPE.

AIBONITO, with a population of two thousand, and situated but three miles from the summit, claims only a passing look, and we are carried on toward a town of far more importance, which has obtained a wide-spread notoriety on account of the excellent quality of the tobacco raised in this vicinity. Its name is Cayey. Tobacco is an indigenous plant in Porto Rico, but was not received with favour for a long time after the settlement of the island. The government was opposed to smoking, and two papal bulls are in existence now in which any one practising it was excommunicated. In 1608 a royal *cedula* was issued forbidding the cultivation of tobacco. Twenty-six years later, however, its cultivation was resumed, and has been continued ever since. It was not until 1870, however, that tobacco culture assumed sufficient impetus to make it worthy the name of an industry.

Several qualities are necessary in the plant in order to make its raising successful, and it is almost as essential that the leaf should be elastic, and have a fine aroma and a light, clear colour, as it is that it should have a good flavour and good burning merits. To acquire all of these attributes

so assiduously looked for by buyers, first of all the soil must be rich in salts of potash, and the plant should be grown under atmospheric conditions capable of obtaining these results with proper culture. The district of Cayey possesses all of the natural characteristics needed to furnish the quality of tobacco equal to that of the famous *Vuelta Abajo* of Cuba.

Cayey has also become important as the meeting-point of this west branch of the military road, and that of the shorter road coming in from Guayama on the coast. Though this section is of more recent construction, it has become noted as the route over which the American army marched during the war of 1898, in that well-planned campaign to conquer the island, which was never completed, because the struggle ended before it could be accomplished.

Surrounded by broad, well-watered valleys, the courses of many streams embanked in gorgeous wild flowers, and standing in the midst of a rich plateau that is the reservoir of these mountain rivers, Guayama is a gem of a city, having nearly six thousand inhabitants. Standing back from a stopping-place for trading-vessels, that is nothing but an open roadstead, it is more favoured with modern improvements than many others, and it has a belt of cane-fields on the inland that is the envy of her sisters. These fields are an attractive sight all through the growing season, when their luxuriant green forms one of the prettiest pictures of rural life; and again, decked in tall, snow-white blossoms of feathery lightness, the delight of every passing zephyr, it becomes transcendently beautiful.

This city has one of the finest churches on the island, rich in its altars, and built at a cost of 49,000 pesos. Nothing is done at halves in Guayama. It was founded in 1736, and in direct communication by the way of "grand turnpike" with the capital fifty miles distant, much is to be expected from Guayama in the years to come.

Although this city is not favoured with more than a roadstead, there is a good harbour five miles away, at Arroyo, one of the brightest spots in Porto Rico. This place has a population of a little over two thousand, and not founded until 1885, there is a possibility that it will outrank Guayama in the number of its inhabitants within a few years. Its buildings are wooden, and it has, like its larger sisters, a two-steepled church, which is small but pretty. There are fine gardens in Arroyo. Nobody visits this vicinity without going to the caves of Aguas Buenas, which tun-

nel the earth under the Caguitas River for an explored distance of four hundred yards. There are three of them, and they promise to rival the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky for their underground wonders. The town is on the coast road which connects it directly with Humacao, the capital of the department by that name, and situated on the east. This town of five thousand people stands on the banks of a river by the same name, and is situated three miles from the coast. It was in this vicinity

EXTERIOR MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, GUAYAMA.

that the great hurricane of 1899 started, sweeping the length of the island to Mayaguez, on the western coast.

On the morning of the 7th of August, 1899, the United States Weather Bureau, through its branch established here, announced the rapid approach of a cyclonic disturbance, coming from the Dominican quarter, and danger-signals were ordered to be hoisted at the sub-stations of the Bureau at Ponce and Mayaguez. But the people, only the older of whom had witnessed a storm of serious aspect, were wholly unprepared for the terrible

tempest which was to follow. For several hours before the appearance of this scourge of the tropics the sea was unusually calm, the waves rolling in with gentle motion from a long distance, until near the shore, when they would suddenly rise and hurl themselves against the land with extraordinary violence, and with thunderous sound. A sulphurous odour came in from the sea, the sky was obscured by a vapour, and the sun looked like a ball of fire. The waves increased in violence, the sun grew redder, the wind rose and fell, first from one quarter and then from another, in fitful moods. The creatures of the earth and sky sought hasty shelter, and altogether a wildness and terrifying influence, which can neither be described nor imagined, came over the scene. The sun sank in a shroud of red, and a night of intense blackness set in. The gale of whirlwind, rain, thunder, and lightning struck Humacao about midnight, continuing the rest of the night, and till nearly noon on the 8th. The time occupied by the passage of the island, a distance of about a hundred miles, is shown by the fact that it reached Mayaguez at its height on the morning of the 8th, at nine o'clock. But the latter town, protected by the mountains, did not suffer as much as the other towns in its line.

Few houses escaped destruction in its path, which was wide, and the damage done to property cannot be estimated. The greatest loss of life came from the downpouring of the rain, which fell in such sheeted belts that every river-bed and depression of land was a roaring torrent. The awful noise of the maddened streams, the crash and thunder of giant trees torn up and whipped about like toys in the power of the tempest, the surge of the wind that shook the very mountains, the bellowing of cattle, the neighing of horses, the cries of birds and beasts mingling in one terrible confusion with the shrieks of human beings, amidst the deluge of waters, the sheets of flame darting from the Cimmerian space overhead, and the terrible convulsions of nature on every hand, portrayed the death agonies of the universe itself.

To add to the horror and appalling destruction of the tempest, a tidal wave submerged the southern coast for miles at a stretch, sweeping away what the wind and flood had spared. There is no authentic record of the number killed, and never can be, while the velocity of the hurricane is not known. Though there had been on the average a hurricane every ten years for the nineteenth century, the equal of this had not been witnessed

since 1825, when the towns of Humacao, Patillas, Maunabo, Yabucoa, and many others were destroyed. Another hurricane in 1772 did a great amount of damage, but before that there is no record of others as bad, though several are recorded as far back as 1515, when a large number of the native inhabitants lost their lives.

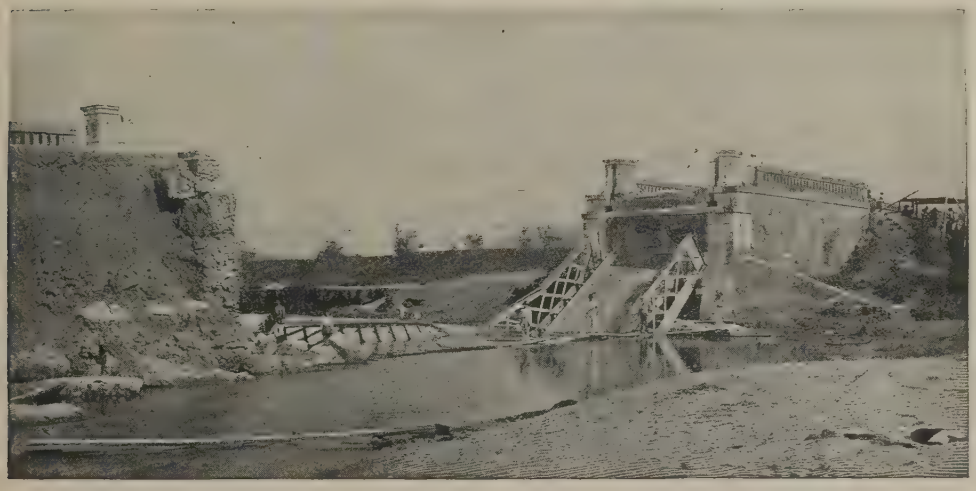
On the whole, the towns of this southeastern slope are as replete with human and picturesque interest as those on the opposite end of the island. If we miss those cultivated forests in the coffee plantation, we find here another industry that is promising. Supported by the excellent pasturage of this region, and that to the north, are vast herds of cattle and horses, which not only meet the demands of the inhabitants of the island, but are

THE PUBLIC SQUARE, CAGUAS, AFTER THE HURRICANE.

exported to all parts of the West Indies. So rich and rank are the continuous crops of grass afforded by these lands, that an average of three head of cattle can be pastured on two acres of ground. These cattle are fat and sleek, and steers weighing twelve hundred pounds are the rule rather than the exception. Cold storage, however, is needed before the meat can be handled with proper success. The same fact holds true regarding the product of milk, which has to be boiled in a constant temperature of about 80° to keep it sweet. No butter is made here to speak of, what is used being imported from Holland and Denmark in sealed cans. Considerable of the land now utilised for pasturage formerly belonged to sugar plantations.

Situated sixteen miles east of Humacao is the prosperous town of

Fajardo, of about thirty-five hundred inhabitants, with an excellent harbour, where a great number of commercial interests are fast assuming most flattering proportions. Most of the planters devote themselves to the manufacture of Muscovado sugar. The shooks, hickory hoops, pine boards, and provisions used here come largely from the United States. There is a third-class lighthouse at the entrance to the port, called Cabezas de San Juan, and a custom-house open to universal commerce. The town is situated about one mile and a half from the bay. Its climate is temperate and healthful. This is the town Commodore Perry besieged on November 14, 1824, but whose inhabitants showed such resistance that



BRIDGE BETWEEN CAGUAS AND RIO PIEDRAS, DESTROYED BY HURRICANE.

he ended the attack and stood off to sea. Two fires, in 1832 and 1833, nearly destroyed the place, but it soon began to rally. About one-half of the population are whites.

The Porto Ricans, as a rule, have distinguished themselves for their love of homeland, and the incident mentioned of Fajardo has a parallel in the case of San German, founded in 1511 by Captain Miguel Toro, at the opposite end of the island. In 1743 the British attempted to capture the town, and did succeed in effecting a landing, but they were repulsed by the inhabitants and driven off, losing one vessel in the attack. Many of the citizens of San German have shown great bravery and patriotism in times of danger. This is now a city, a title which it has enjoyed since 1877, of about four thousand, and as we mentioned

in our visit to Mount Serratte, is situated on the summit of a long, irregular hill, embosomed in one of the fairest and richest valleys of the tropics, watered by two rivers, and shaded by groves of lemon, orange, and tamarind trees, where cane, coffee, and cotton are raised in abundance.

Coming back to Fajardo from our imaginary flight to the west, we find ourselves under the shadows of Porto Rico's "Old Man of the Mountain," which, measured from the bottom of the sea off this coast, is the highest peak of land in the world, and, could it be lifted bodily from its ocean bed, would tower into the sky two thousand feet above the snow-capped crest of Mount Everest in the Himalayas.[1]

While the western coast, with its long reaches of blue waves dashing on coral reefs, becomes wearisome to the beholder, the shore-view on this quarter is broken and picturesque, producing a variety of landscapes which constantly awaken the interest of the voyager by sea or the traveller by land. Off this coast, and belonging to Porto Rico, are the extensive cane-fields of the island of Vieques, gently rising toward the interior, and giving a happy relief to the level plains of the mainland, while Culebra, smaller and farther removed, adds the attractions of its fertile slopes. From these sisters stretch away to the south and west that long and graceful arc of islands forming the Lesser Antilles, and a protection for this coast from the outer ocean.

This coast, with its innumerable coral islets shooting out from the mainland, is really less known than other sections, and though there are deep passages along which it is safe for big vessels to pass, they need to be mapped before the ports here will become the commercial centres that they and the surrounding country deserve to be, and are capable of becoming.

[1] Mount Tina of Santo Domingo, over eleven thousand feet above sea-level, would add seven thousand feet to this calculation, but the latter does not rise with quite the abruptness from the bottom of the sea.

SAN JUAN.

CHAPTER IX.

SAN JUAN.

FROM Guayama the great Military Road, ascending the highlands with an easy grade, swings through an ever-changing panorama of tropical mountain scenery, with occasional glimpses of the sea glimmering through the tree-tops, until the summit of the ridge is surmounted, and with a slow farewell to the parting plains of the southern slope, winds down through beautiful vistas of woodlands to Cayey. The two routes, uniting here, taking a generally northerly course, lead on toward their destination, San Juan, passing on the way Caguas, Rio Piedras, and other towns of less account, through vast fields of tobacco, and great groves of wild fruit-trees, all speaking of the unlimited possibilities of the Island Garden, now only partly fulfilled, while the roadside is ornamented with tree-ferns that for beauty and delicacy of foliage vie with their kindred in Hawaii, with thousands of cocoa-palms standing along the way like sentinels, and, over-topping all else, the stately royal palms, the pride of the forest. Alternated with miles of these forest tracings are miles of cane-fields, relieved by smaller areas of tasselled corn. Amid all this are great numbers of fruit-trees, among them the pear, lime, orange, banana, and gourd trees, until the traveller comes to think he is passing through a veritable Eden.

Reaching Caguas at a swinging pace, having made the intervening distance all too soon, the traveller, if he is at all desirous of varying this scene with another of far different aspect, will stop at Caguas to visit the "Dark Cave" of Aguas Buenas. As this is but six miles away

and is reached to within a mile over a fine branch of the Military Road, it would be no irksome task if made through any ordinary scenery. But with such scenes as greet the eye continuously during the drive, and never twice alike, it is a trip never to be forgotten.

Following a well-built road, we see here repeated something like a prototype of the scene along the Utuado trail, while we climb foot by foot the mountain steeps until the beautiful valley of Caguas is not only five miles away, but a thousand feet below us. Between us are broad acres of tasselling sugar-cane, the purple brushes denoting the near approach of the harvest, and the brick chimneys marking the site of the mills hidden by the thick growth; ahead of us, still higher in the air, like an eagle perched on its eyrie, is outlined the little hamlet of Aguas Buenas, destined to become world-famous on account of the great underground wonder of which it forms the gateway. It is at best a cluster of thatched huts, bespeaking a sort of peaceful poverty, ruled over by an old, weather-stained church, whose cracked bell sends out its notes like the voice of old age. Again we see the laws of gravitation broken by the hillside dwellings, held by some unseen power to their precarious perches.

The cavern is said to be a mile above us, as the bee flies; as the trail runs, two miles; as far as climbing is concerned, five miles. It might be ten for aught we care or know. It has certainly ten miles of natural wonders crowded into that mile of bee-flight, and who cares if the way is rough, and the path lies continually on the ridge-pole of the world, so long as horses' feet are sure, and one plucks golden globes as one rides? A pause is made at the summit to admire the panorama, that presents all the freshness and variety of temptation offered by the first view given of Porto Rican scenery. We are enthusiasts, we acknowledge that. What is one good for who has never said in his soul, "This is beautiful, and I will make the most of it?" If he doubts his own capacity of appreciation, let him climb the steep that forms the watershed of Aguas Buenas.

It would not be strange if we were a little misty in regard to the points of compass, after turning so many somersaults, tracing so many Cs, Ss, Ys, and Zs on the alphabet of rocks and ledges, but we do not see double or look twice on the same object. There is no need, no opportunity for

such in that amphitheatre of mountains. First of all, to the south, whither we must go to find the object of our coming, rises the limestone bluff like a sheeted ghost, very erect, very stern in its outlines. To the southwest extend, miles deep, the gateways of the mountains, the valleys, swung ajar from posts two thousand feet in height. On the northwest twin rims of mountains mark dark lines on the blue sky. Around to the east, which presents a wedge-like vista of red and brown desert teeming with tropical verdure and dotted with towns and plantations, there rises the long, twisting ridge of the Loquillo, with its lofty crest, El Yunque,

THE HARBOUR OF SAN JUAN.

seen dimly through the screen of vapour. At our feet lies the great mountain bowl of Caguas.

Then a descent is begun which offsets the climb on the other side. It is made like a corkscrew winding into the cork, only the cork is a mighty rock, and the bottle is a subterranean cavity in the heart of the earth. The horses are left behind, and the last part of the journey has to be made on foot into a gorge fringed with orange and banana trees, southern ferns with leaves of most delicate tracery five feet in length, and vines loaded with velvet foliage and bright-hued flowers. Set in such gorgeous trappings are the yawning openings making the entrances to the "Dark Cave."

This subterranean vault has not been explored to its extent yet, and after our recent experience we are not the ones to do it, let us be frank enough to own. Neither, indeed, are our guides, who are so poorly pro-

vided with torches that they become alarmed by the time we have gone through half a dozen chambers, and along as many winding passages, some low-walled and jagged, others broader and smoother. The first chamber is a dungeon, damp and dismal enough; but, as singular as it may seem, each succeeding apartment gains in beauty and clearness. But we are assailed by such a legion of bats, drawn from their dark corners by the light of the torches, that our advance is checked, and made uncanny by the thousands of winged, hideous things, soft and slimy to the touch, slapping us in the face, or brushing against our necks until the cold chills run down our backs.

A little over two miles of this underground passage is made, when we are told that this is the limit of explorations, though cavern after cavern opens darkly on either hand as we have advanced, and it is not unlikely that miles of these chambers lie strung, one after another, ahead of us. Here our guides assure us it will not do to dally, much more to go farther, as it is very doubtful if the torches will last to get back to daylight. As if to prove the truth of the words, one of them sputters at this moment, and expires. Nothing loath, we turn back, but we have not gone a mile before two more torches are gone out, and only one remains. All become alarmed now, for it seems certain no one can find his way out amid the labyrinth of passages and ascents and descents. The bottom is wet and slimy, and time and again some one stumbles over an obstruction in the pathway. One now holds upon another, lest we get separated and hopelessly lost. Only in one thing have we gained, and that is in a lessened number of bats through the loss of the torches.

Now the last light flickers, and threatens to die out. Eagerly the carrier tries to fan it into new life, but to no purpose. While we are rushing madly forward in the vain hope of reaching daylight before it is too late, we are left in the blinding, horrible, deathly darkness, where the very air seems to creep, and everything we touch to crawl!

"Move slowly and keep close together," says the guide. "There is a deep chasm somewhere near by." A stone loosened by one of our feet goes crashing down into the darkness, and it seems a minute before the sound of its descent, as it bounds from rock to rock, ends, telling that it has either reached the bottom of the chasm, or passed beyond our hearing in its downward journey. Whichever it may be, it does not matter to us.

"What shall we do?" each one vainly asks. It is impossible to find one's way out of the midst of these tangled passages, abysses, blinding darkness, and the awful oppressive atmosphere which fairly takes away one's breath as it does his sight. To remain is to give up hope. Our only alternative is to keep on, until we reach daylight or— The guides think we are about half-way to the outside, but beyond that can give us no information. Knowing better than we the devious windings of the main passage, they also know better how impossible it will be to follow the course out. One of them, with a calmness that is remarkable, declares

THE QUAYS, SAN JUAN.

it will be utterly impossible to find our way back. In our despair, we give expression to shouts for help, — a help which we know only too well is not at hand. We do not repeat this. The result is too terrifying. In that dungeon-like place, a thousand hideous voices take up the sound until the whole infernal regions echo and reëcho with the cries; we are heartily glad when the last sound has died away in the distance.

Then we begin to grope our way ahead, moving with extreme caution and with bated breath. Slimy creatures slide over our feet, and creep away into the corners. About our heads dart and fly other inhabitants of this uncanny world. We shudder as they come in contact with us, and

all fruits of a soft, perishable nature, among which may be mentioned the mango, sapote, and alligator pear. Excesses in eating and drinking must be avoided. Alcohol becomes a deadly beverage if one persists in its use. Here a slight wound soon becomes inflamed, heals slowly, and may prove fatal. It has been proved that cotton garments are better than linen; and better than either is flannel.

There are two seasons in Cuba and Porto Rico, as there are all over the tropics, the wet and dry. The former begins in May and ends in September. The hurricane period is between the first of August and the middle of October. The climate is at its best during the months of February, March, April, and the earlier part of May, when the climate of New England is at its worst.

Whoever goes to Cuba must first see to it that he becomes acclimated through a severe course of treatment, which will in all probability take a year. First of all he must impoverish his blood, for the rich, deep hue so much desired in his Northern clime is not in favour here. It is in fact incompatible with good health. He must drink no coffee or alcoholic drinks. Pretty sure to have to undergo the acclimating fever, he must purge himself freely upon arriving by using an acid purgative. He should bathe in luke-warm water, never in cold water. He cannot be too careful in regard to his habits or exercise, work or diet.

The most noted of the diseases liable to attack a stranger, and one which does not spare the native population, is the yellow fever, which has generally appeared as an epidemic once in ten years, and does not disappear in the intervals between. As this lingers on the coast, and seldom, if ever, enters the higher altitudes, it is always best for the newcomer to seek the interior as soon as possible. It should be said that less than eight per cent. of those attacked by this fever die of it.

The most fatal complaint to strangers is *tetanus*, or lockjaw. Injuries to the feet are most prone to terminate in this disease. Intermittent fever is another disease to be feared, and it is best for the patient to leave the island as soon as possible after contracting this complaint. Like all forms of malaria, it is contracted in the lower or swamp regions.

Leprosy exists here to a considerable extent. In fact it is claimed with apparently good authority that there are more cases here than in the Hawaiian Islands. The whites have little to fear from this,

however, while the Chinese seem very susceptible to it, as well as the negroes.

If reading the foregoing account, which by no means is complete, brings a feeling of dread to the reader, it must not be understood to mean that these diseases are prevalent all over the island. Like other countries, Cuba has her danger spots, which it will be prudent to avoid if possible. Probably two-thirds of the island is as healthful, even in its warmest period, as

SAN JUAN HEAD AND MORRO LIGHT.

any country in the world. Cases of extreme longevity are not rare. There are well authenticated instances showing that natives have reached the age of 125, and even 150 years. These are mainly among the negro race. It might be well to add that the Isle of Pines appears to be free from yellow fever, and is, on the whole, very clear of disease. Under an improved sanitary system, which the island is sure to get with American government, it is safe to say that Cuba will eventually become an exceptionally healthful locality.

Porto Rico has a decided advantage over Cuba in the matter of natural drainage, and the happier climatic results come from this, as well as the great fertility of the soil. The newcomer is amazed at the number of rivers and small streams, aggregating nearly fifteen hundred worth mentioning, dashing out from deep mountain gorges, or down precipitous cliffs, sooner or later threading some rich bottom land or winding like silvery ribbons across the plains, affording a complete network of irrigating canals for every square mile of the island. And some portions could be vastly benefited by the application of this natural system of irrigation.

As well as increasing the productiveness of the island's soil, these outlets of the mountain springs, tumbling down high reaches of rock, hidden at times from the beholder by the thick foliage of forest trees, overhung by gigantic ferns, and perfumed by sweet-flowering plants, now springing into sight clothed in the glorious sunlight or clad in the snowy foam of the cataract, to disappear suddenly under an archway of embowering trees and swaying vines, reappearing on some steep hillside which they overspread with a green carpet, or singing merrily under miles of coffee bushes, which shower upon them jasmine blossoms of snowy purity and delicate fragrance, besides providing that necessary element of good living, plenty of clear water, give to Porto Rico a charm of good health which none of the other islands of the West Indies can ever hope to enjoy.

The American who goes to Porto Rico is not put on probation for a year, that he may become acclimated, — an acclimation that too often means annihilation, — but he has no serious enemy to fight from the outset, while if he goes there to escape the rigours of the northern winters, he finds that he has indeed reached the Mecca of his dreams. It is true your soldier friend who served in the campaign of the island may tell you he was heartily sick of the climate before he was allowed to leave, but the record of the death-rate of his companions was a happy contrast to that of the campaign of Santiago, or even that of Chickamauga in his own land. Before he condemns he should remember the circumstances and conditions under which he went there, as well as the time, and he will find that everything had worked to make it as bad as possible. On the whole, while the Island Garden is not the paradise of the Pacific, it cannot

prove other than the most popular resort for tourists from the Atlantic coast.

The broad and fertile plains, the rich bottom lands, the picturesque mountain slopes, the lofty plateaux of the highlands, the numerous rapid rivers, one and all offer suggestions of many possibilities. Their remarkable productiveness is seen in an infinite variety of crops grown with suc-

BUILDING IN SAN JUAN USED BY AMERICAN TROOPS AS HOSPITAL.

cess. Fruits of almost every conceivable kind grow wild in profusion, and when the cultivator and pomologist shall give them his attention the result cannot be other than a revelation of the possibilities of Nature.

Still, as we at last gladly turn our footsteps away from this Edenic scene homeward, we are impressed with the great truth learned only through human experience that, however the poet may love to descant upon the ravishing beauty of his ideal realm, however the romancer may delight to picture the glories of some favoured paradise of the far-away seas, the cry

of the wanderer for the home of his boyhood, and the associations he once spurned, is not merely the plaint of a bleeding heart, but the divine truth, that no Eden is without its serpent; and let him represent whatever race he may, or find whatever spot he will, there is no place on earth so well adapted to him, no place to which he is so well fitted, as his own, his native land.

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